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COLUMBIA

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GCC wants Iraqi border recognition

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Gulf states want Iraq to recognise not only Kuwait's sovereignty but also the new border between the two countries drawn by the United Nations, a Kuwaiti foreign ministry official said Sunday. Diplomats from the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are lobbying the U.N. in New York to force Iraq to accept their demand, said the official, who asked not to be named. The GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman — wanted to avoid the risk of Iraq recognising Kuwaiti sovereignty without respecting the new border. The GCC wants an official and unequivocal Iraqi recognition of Kuwait's sovereignty and borders, "said the Kuwaiti official. GCC states would only be satisfied with official recognition from the Revolutionary Command Council, Iraq's highest authority, ratified by the Iraqi parliament, he said. Officials have suggested that Iraq was ready to recognise Kuwaiti sovereignty before a U.N. review of an oil embargo imposed on Baghdad after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Prince Abdullah briefed on labour issues

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein on Sunday called at the Ministry of Labour and was briefed by the minister, Khalid Al Ghazawi, on the ministry's progress in providing vocational training for Jordanians and helping job-seekers. Prince Abdullah met with directors of the ministry's departments and called on them to direct special attention to the development of human resources and providing job opportunities for Jordanian job-seekers.

Petersen urges peace moves

CAIRO (AFP) — Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen urged countries in the Middle East to make their peace after talks here Sunday with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Musa. In a joint press conference he said it was "time to reach an accord between all the concerned parties" adding that "obstacles in the Israeli-Syrian track have to be eliminated." Mr. Petersen was also due to meet President Hosni Mubarak on his 48-hour visit here, after arriving from Damascus where he held talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharras. He added Denmark would take part in a meeting in Paris in September of donor countries which have pledged to back Palestinian self-rule.

7 pro-Syrians executed in Iraq

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Seven Iraqi members of the pro-Syrian faction of the Arab Baath Socialist Party have been executed in Iraq, party colleagues announced Sunday in a statement carried by the official Syrian news agency SANA. The faction of the Baath Party, which has ruled Syria since 1963, is bitterly opposed to a rival faction in power in Iraq since 1968. The statement from the "Iraqi command" of the pro-Syrian faction based in Damascus did not say when the seven were executed. It named them as: Mohammad Abdul Ka'i, Mohammad Ayub Al Dulaymi, Maao Wahib, Walid Al Ubaydi, Hamed Abdul Ka'i, Mohammad Kassem Hammoudi and Zuhair Hassan.

Palestinian killed in Fateh turf war

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — A Palestinian was shot to death in an apparent turf war between members of rival security groups within Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fateh, Palestinian sources said Sunday. Nidal Hassan Khouli, 25, was killed and six others wounded during a gun battle Saturday in the West Bank village of Irtah, said the sources. The dispute was between the Palestinian internal intelligence service and another force known as the presidential security service which were competing for influence in the area, they said. Khouli was a member of presidential security.

Libya ships aid to Yemen

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Libya has sent 325 tonnes of food and medicines to Yemen by ship to help those affected by the recent two-month civil war, the official Libyan news agency JANA said Sunday. A ship loaded with 500 tonnes of food and 25 tonnes of medicines and milk products left Libya Saturday bound for Yemen. The United Nations has launched a \$21.7 million appeal for Yemen, which was torn by civil war.

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Demirel ends brief visit supporting peace moves

King, Turkish leader underline Iraq's role
HM says Jordan-Israel talks not easy

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Turkish President Suleiman Demirel on Sunday ended a one-day visit to the Kingdom saying he would seek further strengthening of Jordanian-Turkish relations and pledging Ankara's support for the establishment of permanent peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Demirel described as "fruitful" talks he held with His Majesty King Hussein on bilateral ties, the Middle East peace process and other regional developments, saying the views of the two countries held on these issues are "almost identical."

Welcoming the Turkish president in Jordao as a "partner" in the future, King Hussein said the two countries were committed to work together, thanking Turkey for its support for Jordan in "all fields so that to achieve our goals and ambitions" for the future.

Noting Turkey's involvement in the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace talks, Mr. Demirel told a press conference before departure from Amman that "I cannot tell you anything specific (about how Turkey can help the peace process) but if we can be useful" Turkey would not hesitate to offer help.

Mr. Demirel expressed support for the developments in the Jordanian-Israeli track of the peace talks, describing as "a major breakthrough" the Washington Declaration which was signed by King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on July 25.

King Hussein said progress was being made in the Jordanian-Israeli negotiations and "the atmosphere is good," adding that no aspect of the negotiations was surprising or gave the impression that the talks were not proceeding according to schedule.

"There is no reason for scepticism. It is fairly obvious, and I have made it very clear from the outset that all (the problems) cannot be resolved overnight. They will take time and hard work and I believe that this is what is happening," King Hussein said in response to a question.

Responding to a question on the situation in Iraq, King Hussein said: "We have a very serious and continued concern for the integrity of the land and the alleviation of the suffering of the Iraqi people."

The King said both Jordan and Turkey were affected by the situation in Iraq, expressing "hope" that Iraq would once again play a vital role in the region.

"We hope the situation will come to a satisfactory conclusion," King Hussein told reporters at the Royal Palace.

Urging a quick end to the sanctions, Mr. Demirel warned that "if Iraq continues to be isolated, its territorial integrity will be hard to maintain."

Though he stressed Turkey would not act alone to end the sanctions on Iraq, the Turkish president said, "we do believe that the sanctions should be lifted ... and Iraq should be part of the international community."

"All the countries want to trade with Iraq ... but Turkey will not act alone," Mr. Demirel said in response to a question.

The Turkish president warned that the multi-million dollar oil pipeline between Iraq and Turkey would be destroyed unless the pipeline was flushed out soon. He said Turkey was seeking U.N. approval to flush out the pipeline, which contains about 11 million barrels of oil, and "everybody agrees that the pipeline should be flushed out."

But, he said, the question being discussed now is how to use the proceeds from the sales of the oil in the pipeline.

Mr. Demirel said Turkey, the only Middle Eastern country with sufficient water supplies, would soon be selling most of their battles, had pursued the path of peace and so had the Palestinians.

The King said the opportunities available for the Syrians and the Lebanese, considering their very special relationship, "are more than those available to us."

"It does not make sense for us to wait until all issues are resolved because this country is targeted and has suffered and tolerated more than any other country," he said.

The King said Jordan had the option to have gone faster than others, but did not use that option.

King Hussein said progress or lack of it was linked to the situation of the other Arab countries involved in the peace process.

King Hussein said the next stage in the peace process is a battle of a different kind seeking to achieve a comprehensive peace "which we have worked for and started from the same point."

Jordao provided an umbrella to the Palestinian people to speak on their own behalf and act according to their own wish until they charted their own path, "which we blessed and supported," the King said.

Following that Jordao started discussing its own issues, including territorial and water rights and the right of Jordanians to live a decent life, he said.

The King stressed the unity of the Jordanian family irrespective of origins and birthplace.

"Jordan is the home of freedom, it is the country to which Arab brethren and others have turned in different eras and circumstances," he said.

The King added that Jordan would continue to be a home for the "muhajireen and Ansar."

Those who immigrated with the Prophet and those who supported him after migration from Mecca to Medina to spread the message of Islam "until circumstances allow any one to select between staying or leaving by his own volition."

The King warned against any attempts to tamper with national unity.

On Jordan's relations with Arab countries, King Hussein said relations with Qatar and Oman were excellent, adding that relations with other Arab countries were on the way to normalcy.

The King said Jordan's relations with Qatar were based on solid grounds, mutual confidence and genuine desire to achieve cooperation.

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(Continued on page 7)



Turkish President Suleiman Demirel gestures as he answers a question during a joint press conference His Majesty King Hussein held with him after a brief visit Mr. Demirel paid to Jordan on Sunday (photo by Youssef Al Allan)

Jordanian moves help peace process — King

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein said Sunday progress on the Jordanian track of the Arab-Israeli peace talks would push the Middle East peace process forward.

In an interview with the Qatari News Agency (QNA), the King also voiced hope that positive developments would be achieved on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the peace process.

The King stressed that the Arab parties concerned had all started from the same point and at the same time in a serious endeavour to establish a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region.

The King described the beginning of the Jordanian-Israeli peace talks as good, adding that there were no negative things despite the impression that the first round of talks did not yield results.

"Practically, the first round of Jordanian-Israeli talks have yielded results in terms of agreement on the methodology of work during the forthcoming stages, particularly in relation to issues dealing with the delineation of boundaries and environment," the King said.

King Hussein described the talks' atmosphere as positive and good.

The King said Egypt, which used to lead the Arab Nation and Arab armies during most of their battles, had pursued the path of peace and so had the Palestinians.

The King said the opportunities available for the Syrians and the Lebanese, considering their very special relationship, "are more than those available to us."

"It does not make sense for us to wait until all issues are resolved because this country is targeted and has suffered and tolerated more than any other country," he said.

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King heads for Germany, France

AMMAN (Agencies) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor left in Bonn on Monday for a two-day visit, to be followed by talks with President Francois Mitterrand in Paris.

The King would first discuss the Middle East peace process and bilateral ties with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and other leaders Monday.

He will travel to France Tuesday for talks with Mr. Mitterrand and Prime Minister Edouard Balladur Wednesday mainly focusing on the peace process.

He is also due to meet Defence Minister Francois Leotard and Economy Minister Edmond Alphandery.

The King is accompanied by Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, Political Advisor Marwan Al Qassem, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan and Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf.

The King was seen off at the airport by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Princes Abdullah Ben Al Hussein and Rashed Ben Al Hussein and other members of the Royal family, speakers of Parliament, cabinet ministers and other senior officials and high-ranking army officers in addition to the charge d'affaires at the German and French embassies in Amman.

Prince Hassan was sworn in as Regent prior to the King's departure.

In an interview with the Qatari News Agency (QNA) before his departure, King Hussein said: "We hope both governments will support Jordan in these times, especially in removing our debts."

Jordao owes Germany around \$410 million and France \$570 million. Those are part of Jordan's total debts of \$4 billion to the Paris Club of creditor nations.

Washington is writing off \$220 million in Jordanian debts this year and promised to write off an additional \$482 million later.

President Clinton has pressed European creditor nations to follow suit. Britain has since written off \$100 million of Jordanian debt.

Dead Sea negotiations advance Jordan Valley development plans

Combined agency dispatches

JORDANIAN AND ISRAELI delegates ended talks at the Dead Sea Spa hotel on Sunday, their first on Jordanian soil since the two neighbours signed a pact last month ending a 46-year state of war.

More than 10 committees of experts discussed issues ranging from trade and tourism to security and water to keep up momentum in their talks and deal with minute details to ensure a final peace treaty lasts. They will resume talks on Monday.

Jordan's chief delegate Fayez Al Tarawneh told reporters the U.S.-Jordanian-Israeli committee which also met agreed to have "terms of reference" in place by the end of September for a joint multi-billion-dollar master plan to develop the Jordan Rift Valley separating their countries.

"Hopefully we can proceed from there to put together the master plan which will take a long time (to implement)," he said.

In this respect, the three delegations discussed a permanent road that would link Israel, Egypt and Jordan but no fixed location or route has been agreed on yet, said Dr. Tarawneh, who noted that the crossing point that was opened near Aqaba last month was temporary pending the opening of a permanent route.

He said that the trilateral committee was due to discuss cooperation in tourism and marketing of tourist attractions and cooperation in the field of technical aid and infrastructure for schemes.

According to Dr. Tarawneh, subjects related to banks and commerce are listed on the agenda of the two-day meeting. "There is a good prospect for cooperation in this field because of the U.S. representation in the same committee," he added.

Referring to combating drugs, Dr. Tarawneh said that the subject had been discussed in the previous meetings but the committee would resume its discussion and the American side had promised assistance to both sides.

Asked whether he was optimistic about reaching tangible progress Dr. Tarawneh said that the delegations were "determined to attain that goal," noting that the talks would also include water, demarcation of borders, security and occupied lands.

These are basic issues and for Jordan they are among the top priorities in the current negotiations which will continue in Washington on Aug. 31, said Dr. Tarawneh.

"When we speak of a future peace treaty," Dr. Tarawneh added, "it should be comprehensive, providing clear solutions for all these problems."

The Israeli side has yet to present its views concerning the demarcation of borders and, hopefully this will be done during the current session, Dr. Tarawneh said.

Referring to the water issue, Dr. Tarawneh said the three sides had reached a common agreement on discussing this issue as provided for in the joint statement that followed the meetings at Wadi Araba in July.

"In discussing the water resources, whether those of the Jordan or the Yarmouk River or the underground water resources, we have first to define each party's shares in figures and decide on the manner in which the water will reach Jordan," Dr. Tarawneh said.

On tourism, he said that the three sides have visualised practical steps for cooperation in tourism.

The Jordanian private tourist sector will on Monday submit ideas to the Israeli side about promoting cooperation in this regard.

Talks last week on Israel's side of the Dead Sea ended with few tangible results apart from a deal allowing Jordan to export \$30 million worth of goods to Palestinians in the West Bank.

But the two sides did start to tackle specific issues.

Talks at Jordan's Dead Sea Hotel were held amid night security.

The bilateral committees will hold regular meetings on both sides to thrash out details for presentation to the chief delegates at their next main meeting on Oct. 10.

Israel's chief delegate Elyakim Rubenstein said Israel was interested in developing joint projects to make new water available.

"The main problem of water is that there is not enough for everybody and that is why every side is so cautious on the (water) allocation," Eltan Bentsour, deputy director general of the Israeli foreign ministry, said the Jordanian-Israeli accord allowing \$30 million worth of Jordanian products to the West Bank would have beneficial results on the Palestinians living there.

Mr. Bentsour told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the accord represented one positive outcome of the Jordanian-Israeli negotiations, noting that the two sides were hoping to clinch other agreements after reaching a final peace agreement.

Referring to the Dead Sea talks, Mr. Bentsour said: "It is a matter of time before real progress will be achieved."

But he admitted that the

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Cairo says Muslim critics of conference misled by Vatican

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian authorities have stepped up the war of words against Muslim fundamentalists opposed to the U.N. world population conference, accusing them of being misled by the Vatican.

Egyptian Population Minister Maher Mahran said the fundamentalists "never read" the draft working document for the conference which they had bitterly attacked.

His accusation came as the outlawed Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group) warned foreigners Saturday to stay away from the conference, due to be held in Cairo from Sept. 5 to 13, and claimed the murder of a Spanish teenager.

The fundamentalists "got their information from the Vatican's writings and its attack on the conference," said Mr. Mahran.

The U.N.'s "poor translation" of the draft resolution into Arabic, also, he said, inflamed the Muslims.

The conference is expected to be attended by 20,000 delegates from more than 150 countries, including heads of state or government.

The Egyptian government hoped that by hosting the conference it could promote the image of a peace-loving, democratic country and a safe tourist destination.

But its plans were undermined when gunmen attacked a tourist mini-bus Friday near Sohag in southern Egypt, killing a 13-year-old Spanish boy and wounding his father and mother, Gamaa, Egypt's main armed Islamic militant group, later claimed the attack.

The Vatican sparked a controversy when it charged that the conference's draft resolution condoned abortion, homosexuality and extramarital sex.

Muslim scholars in Egypt — both moderate and radical

— followed suit, calling it the "devil's" conference, which would eventually destroy the Muslim world because it was based on principles that violated Islamic ethics.

The Gamaa said in a statement that the forum had been rejected by the Egyptian people and the highest Sunni Muslim authority, Al Azhar.

And the group warned that "foreigners taking part in the 'licentious conference' put their lives at risk."

According to Al Azhar, the draft working document should be revised so that it contains nothing that runs counter to Islamic law.

Mr. Mahran dismissed the allegations.

"All the accusations are wrong. The document is a masterpiece, a work of excellence... to solve the problem of poverty and unemployment in the whole world, particularly in developing countries," he said.

Mr. Mahran stressed that the draft ruled out abortion as a means of family planning, and made "no mention at all" of homosexuality or "ascent and extramarital state or government."

The draft resolution calls for the prevention of unwanted pregnancies and reducing abortion rates, but recommends that women should be given reliable information on abortions and that the operation should be safe.

It also says information on safe sex should be available to prevent the spread of sexual diseases and curb unwanted pregnancies.

But Mr. Mahran said Muslim scholars had zeroed in on the document's terminology, which when translated literally carried connotations unacceptable in Egypt's conservative society.

The literal translation of "sex education" was clumsy, Mr. Mahran said, because

"the word 'sex' has a pornographic colour in Egyptian Arabic."

"It could have been very well translated as 'family health education' or 'physiology of reproduction,' which would have passed off better."

He said the translation had inflamed Egypt's Islamic press, which carried front-page headlines such as "Sex will now be taught in our schools."

But school textbooks carried explanations about human reproduction, "so what are they objecting to?" Mr. Mahran protested.

Another problem had arisen over the expression "sexual health in families and individuals."

Muslim scholars missed the point that "a wife is an individual, and she has problems different to those of a man," Mr. Mahran said. Instead they believed that "individual" meant "outside the framework of marriage."

Recommendations that adolescents should be given information about safe sex had also enraged Muslim scholars.

They interpreted it as condoning teenage sex out of wedlock, "which is a problem we don't have in Egypt," Mr. Mahran said.

However, Egypt does have teenage pregnancies, and despite a law banning marriage under the age of 18, national statistics show that some girls are married off as young as 15.

Mr. Mahran said Egypt ruled out abortion except when the mother's life was at risk, and prohibited homosexuality and extramarital sex.

In any case, the conference's resolutions would not be binding on any country, but "each country can choose to use what is appropriate," Mr. Mahran said.



'ILLEGAL WORKERS': Israeli policemen hold migrants were rounded up after an attack on Palestinians at the Russian Compound in Friday which killed two Israelis near Tel Aviv occupied Jerusalem for not being in possession (AFP photo) of "Israeli permissions" to work. The Palest-

Battle to enforce Islamic law shifts to Egyptian courts

CAIRO (AP) — If Muslim fundamentalists get their way, one of Cairo's more colourful features will soon disappear — enormous movie posters that loom above the streets featuring scantily clad heroines and smirking villains.

Fundamentalists are suing to have the ads declared a violation of Islamic law. They are also going after alcohol, gambling, belly dancing and even the interest rates charged by banks.

Islamic extremists have been revolting against the secular government for 24 years, and the violence has left more than 400 people dead. Five suspected extremists and a police officer were killed in a shootout Saturday, a day after radicals opened fire on a tour bus, killing a Spanish boy.

In recent months, however, police have largely succeeded in isolating the radicals in their strongholds around the southern city of Assiut.

So the battle to enforce Islamic law has shifted to the courts.

Fundamentalists already won a suit against the dress code for school girls and are trying to ban next week's U.N. population conference in Cairo.

"As lawyers, law is our weapon," explains Taha Abdul Ghalil. "Resorting to the judiciary is the strongest way to change deviation in this society and to punish the deviators."

Mr. Abdul Ghalil, one of 25 lawyers behind the poster suit, is careful to separate himself from armed militants.

"Since we are not extremists... we resorted to law instead of violence to change the 'monstrous' the 'wrong'."

But intellectuals and some government officials say the lawsuits are just another way of forcing Islamic law on all Egyptians, including Christians and those Muslims who resist the strictest view of the Koran.

Fundamentalist lawyers, who control Egypt's lawyers' Union, hinge their arguments on a section of the Egyptian constitution that says Sharia, the basis of all law.

Hesham Muharak, a lawyer with the Egyptian Organisation of Human Rights, said the fundamental-

ists are using the courts because they cannot win on the political front.

"It is the right of every citizen to go to the judiciary, but their goal is not to achieve legal or judicial gains," he said. "It is a form of political propaganda and increasing pressure to Islamise the state's institutions."

A suit against Nassr Abu Zeid, a University of Cairo literature professor, shows how far the fundamentalists will go to intervene in private lives.

Lawyers in the case argue Mr. Abu Zeid's scholarly writings show he has renounced his Islamic faith and therefore, under Sharia, can no longer remain married to his Muslim wife.

Egyptian Minister Hussein BahaaEddine says a key part of his now-defunct dress code — requiring parental consent for school girls to wear a veil — resulted because militant teachers coerced some girls to put on head scarves.

"Many people are afraid to report such actions," he said, complaining that an "extremist tide" was threatening Egypt.

The fundamentalists' suit maintained the dress code interfered with religious conscience because school uniforms for girls ages six to 11 did not cover the hair and neck.

An administrative court overturned the dress code ruling last week, saying it involved an issue of personal freedom that could only be decided by legislation.

In the movie poster case, the fundamentalists' evidence includes posters that are tame by Western standards. In one, an actress is showing cleavage; in another, the actress is wearing a short nightgown.

The suit to ban next week's U.N. International Conference on Population and Development charges that its draft proposal advocates abortion and free sex, in violation of Sharia. A ruling is expected Tuesday but most doubt the court will buy the argument.

Sheikha Yousef Al Badri, an adviser to the fundamentalist lawyers, believes they must keep filing religious cases even if the loss in secular courts.

Hamas member overcomes handicap to marry

JABALIYA, the Gaza Strip (AFP) — A Palestinian Hamas activist who was declared clinically dead after carrying out an anti-Israeli attack celebrated his recovery Saturday by getting married.

Salah Mustapha Ali Osman, 23, was seriously wounded a year ago when he and two other Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) fighters attacked a bus in East Jerusalem, killing two Israelis.

Mr. Osman was in a coma for months and first Israeli and then Palestinian doctors declared there was no hope.

But he began to recover slowly in May, and despite serious handicaps he married a Palestinian woman in her 20s from the Jabaliya refugee camp.

Hamas, which treats Mr. Osman as a hero, paid all the wedding costs and funded his computer studies.

Mr. Osman's father, known as Abu Rami, told how he went to the woman's family to ask for her hand in marriage for his son, warning them how badly handicapped he was.

"She accepted without hesitating," Abu Rami said.

Mr. Osman, a member of Ezzedin Al Qassam, the armed wing of Hamas, was one of three fighters who killed two Israelis in the July 1 bus attack and took a car passenger hostage.

The two fighters were killed while Osman was hit by several bullets, including one which lodged in his head.

He spent six weeks in a coma in two Israeli hospitals, and when doctors said he could not regain consciousness he was questioned by police and by the Hamas ministry official, Mething Malwal, and the spokesman of the government negotiation delegation, Ali Al Hajj Mohammad, SUNA reported. During her two-day visit, she is also due to hold talks with the head of the government delegation, Mohammad Al Amin Khalifa, and with Ibrahim Abu Oaf, responsible for rescue operations in the south, SUNA said. Ms. Wells visited Khartoum in June to discuss aid for refugees in southern Sudan. Khartoum called Thursday for a postponement of the next round of talks between the government and the SPLA, brokered by the Inter-Governmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD), which includes Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea, use "shuttle diplomacy" to negotiate between the two parties.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mestiri leader threatened by Afghans faction

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Mahmoud Mestiri, the former Tunisian foreign minister leading U.N. attempts to end the Afghan conflict, has received death threats from an Afghan group, diplomatic sources said here Sunday. Mr. Mestiri is in Islamabad, and Pakistan authorities have stepped up the security around him, the sources said. But the United Nations office in Islamabad refused to confirm or deny the reports. The name of the group threatening Mr. Mestiri was not known. But a diplomat said: "This is an attempt to undermine the peace process that the United Nations is setting underway. They are trying to warn the United Nations to stay out of this." Mr. Mestiri started the U.N. peace initiative earlier this year. But it is an open secret that certain Afghan faction leaders are hostile to his aims.

Relatives of soldiers killed in Gulf protest

LONDON (AP) — The father of a British soldier killed by U.S. fire in the Gulf war complained Saturday that he was ignored while Washington paid compensation to officers killed over Iraq in peacetime. The U.S. government announced Friday that it will pay \$100,000 payments to each of the families of the 11 who were killed in the mistaken downing of two U.S. army helicopters in northern Iraq on April 14. The victims included two British officers, Major Harry Shapland, 28, and Colonel Jonathan Swann, 51. "Our opinion is that it stinks," said Mick Thompson, whose 19-year-old son Lee and eight other British soldiers were killed in February 1991 when U.S. fired on their armoured cars in action in Iraq. "You have nine squaddies killed by so-called friendly fire... and our government refused after a verdict of unlawful killing to press it any further. As soon as some officers get killed they think to hold an inquiry. It's just so disgusting that they should treat rank in death," Mr. Thompson said. Denis MacShane, an opposition Labour Party lawmaker who has taken up the cause of the nine soldiers, said Saturday that the British government should compensate the families, then ask for reimbursement from Washington. "This is a disgraceful example of the unfair and double standard Britain in which the government moves swiftly on behalf of the officer class but does nothing for private soldiers who join the army escape from the dole queue," Mr. MacShane said.

Police hold 55 for medicine trafficking

TEHRAN (AFP) — Police arrested 55 people for trafficking in vital medicine in the Iranian capital, a newspaper reported. The conservative Rasseel said the suspects were accused of selling scarce medicine on sidewalks in southern and central Tehran. Police also seized more than 150 tonnes of medicine and medical supplies which the traffickers had hoarded. Iranian hospitals and drug stores have been suffering a serious shortage of medicine for the past year. Authorities say the shortage has been aggravated by profiteers who divert the medicine most in demand to the black market for sale at exorbitant prices. The government allocates more than \$400 million each year to subsidise medicine, but the amount is hardly enough to meet the growing demand.

Iran names top judicial officials

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's Chief Justice Mohammad Yazdji has appointed a new prosecutor-general and chairman of the supreme court, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. Mr. Yazdji named Hojatoleslam Morteza Moqtadaei as the new prosecutor-general. He was formerly supreme court chairman. Mr. Moqtadaei, a moderate regarded as close to Iran's spiritual guide Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, replaced the radical Abolfazl Mousavi-Tabrizi, who became Mr. Yazdji's chief advisor. Ayatollah Mohammad-Mohammadi Ghilani was appointed chairman of the supreme court. He was previously a member of the Council of Guardians, a body set up to ensure that laws conform with the constitution and Islam. Last Sunday Mr. Yazdji, 65, was reappointed chief justice for another five years with the task of reorganising the judicial system. Ayatollah, who appoints the chief justice, said he wanted to ensure that "opportunists and the corrupt are removed from key posts" in the judicial system. Parliament authorised the streamlining of the judiciary in April, aiming particularly to clarify the role of revolutionary courts.

U.S. envoy in Sudan to discuss peace

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A U.S. envoy had talks with Sudanese officials in Khartoum Saturday on prospects for progress in peace talks between the Sudanese government and southern rebels, the Sudanese News Agency SUNA said. The visit by Envoy Melissa Wells came two days after Sudan called for an adjournment of the next round of negotiations with the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) set for Sept. 5-7 in Nairobi. Shortly after her arrival, Ms. Wells held talks with a Sudanese foreign ministry official, Mething Malwal, and the spokesman of the government negotiation delegation, Ali Al Hajj Mohammad, SUNA reported. During her two-day visit, she is also due to hold talks with the head of the government delegation, Mohammad Al Amin Khalifa, and with Ibrahim Abu Oaf, responsible for rescue operations in the south, SUNA said. Ms. Wells visited Khartoum in June to discuss aid for refugees in southern Sudan. Khartoum called Thursday for a postponement of the next round of talks between the government and the SPLA, brokered by the Inter-Governmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD), which includes Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea, use "shuttle diplomacy" to negotiate between the two parties.

Clashes in Iraq scare off refugees

ERBIL (AFP) — Clashes since May in northern Iraq have left thousands of Kurdish refugees fleeing to neighbouring Iraq too scared to return to their homes, U.N. officials said Saturday.

Only 200 Iraqi Kurdish families have returned to northern Iraq so far this year, although the United Nations set up a programme to support 50,000 returning refugees from Iraq.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) blames a bloody power struggle between rival Kurdish groups for keeping the refugees away.

"First we designed a programme for 50,000 Iraqi Kurdish refugees returning from Iraq, then we went down to 20,000, then to 10,000. But so far only 200 families have returned," said Christopher Lee, UNHCR coordinator in Iraq.

More than 300 people have died in fighting between the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) for control of Iraqi Kurdistan.

The region was taken over by the Kurds after a revolt against the government which followed the 1991 Gulf war.

PUK leader Jalal Talabani escaped a car-bomb attack in

Erbil Thursday after broadcasting a joint appeal with KDP leader Massoud Barzani in parliament for an immediate end to fighting.

There are no official statistics for Iraqi Kurds still living in Iraq, but the KDP estimates the figure at between 100,000 and 300,000.

"Most of our people in Iraq want to return," said Kerimchah Ahmad, a senior KDP official who lived in Iraq himself for 14 years before returning to Erbil in northern Iraq two years ago.

"Most of them are living under miserable conditions. Only those who fled there in 1975 could earn good money and are relatively rich."

"The others are living in camps, are only allowed to work where they stay, and suffer other limitations."

"This year they didn't return because a brother war broke out in Iraqi Kurdistan. After May 1, when the clashes started, almost nobody crossed the border."

Diana, a small town 80 kilometres north of Erbil, is one of the places where UNHCR officials have prepared to welcome refugees returning from Iraq.

Under the programme, refugees would be supported with food rations for four months, given cement and wood to build shelter, and handed \$100 to buy sheep, goats or donkeys.

But it is not just clashes between Kurds which are keeping refugees away, said another KDP official, Nizar Mohammad.

Mr. Mohammad said Iraqi villages near the border with Turkey were being infiltrated by the rebel Turkish Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), then blasted in Turkish air raids.

Villages like Edlebe, Hupa and Begalwa were reconstructed last year so former inhabitants could return.

But this year the PKK entered all these villages and forced us to leave our houses," said a former Edlebe resident, 60-year-old Shurshid Paqi.

"So we are again refugees in Diana, waiting for I don't know what. Half of the people of our village Edlebe is still in Iraq. When they heard about this, they didn't dare to return."

In the face of problems in northern Iraq, the UNHCR is unsure how to proceed with its refugee programme.

"We really don't know what to do," admitted Mr. Lee. "We decided the programmes to support the returnees from Iraq, but if they're not coming and if the situation is not stable, we can't do anything."

Iraqi Kurds fled to Iraq in three waves — the first in 1975 after Iraq suppressed a Kurdish guerrilla campaign and razed 800 Kurdish villages along the border with Iran.

In 1988, Iraq launched a new offensive, forcing thousands of Kurds to escape into Iraq and Turkey. Hundreds of thousands more fled fighting with Saddam's forces during the 1991 Kurdish uprising.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 *Ph Et Hercule*

17:10 *Restonnoir*

17:30 *Musiques Sans Frontiere*

18:30 *News in French*

19:00 *News in Hebrew*

19:15 *Black Beauty*

20:00 *News in Arabic*

20:30 *Home Free*

21:10 *A Galactic Odyssey*

22:00 *News in English*

22:30 *Matrix*

PRAYER TIMES

06:42 *Fajr*

06:03 *(Sunrise) Dhuhr*

12:37 *Dhuhr*

16:14 *'Asr*

19:11 *Maghreb*

20:52 *Isha*

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedisch, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terraviva Church Tel. 623666

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will drop slightly with winds northerly moderate to active. In Agaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 20 / 30

Agaba 24 / 38

Deserts 15 / 33

Jordan Valley 24 / 37

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 32, Agaba 40 Humidity readings: Amman 27 per cent, Agaba 22 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Ghaleb Zawalid 736011

Dr. Khalid Asfour 666773

Dr. Adnan Zaghlool 898140

Dr. Fakhri Balbasi 663412

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdous pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Nairookh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 640455

Shameel pharmacy 637660

Nairookh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Akram Momen 248793

Alquds pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Yahya Tarifi 981520

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate

Rescue 630345

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630221

Hotel Complaints 603800

Price Complaints 666176

Water and Sewerage 874667

Amman Municipality 787111

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 660100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

Khaliq Maternity, J. Amn

6442816

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 642412

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Mathias, J. Amman 636140

Felotina, Shmeisani 661714

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Munshir Hospital 6672719

The Islamic, Abdali 66612757

Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646

Italian, Al-Munshir 7771013

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511126

Army, Marks 89161115

Queen Alia Hospital 60224050

Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)963323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)905650

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)960732

Al Hilana Modern Hospital (09)999990

IRBID:

Prince Basmal Hospital (02)275535

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272725

Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hassan Medical Centre 813813/32

HJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday

Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in lib per kg.

Apple 720 / 400

Banana 680

Banana (Mokammur) 620

Cabbage 620 / 70

Carrot 390 / 250

Cauliflower 240 / 150

Cucumbers (large) 250 / 150

Cucumbers (small) 450 / 300

Eggplant 200 / 100

Fig 460 / 350

Garlic 900 / 500

Grapes 320 / 200

Guava 440 / 250

Lemons 330 / 230

Marrow (large) 330 / 230

Marrow (small) 500 / 300

Muhukish 140 / 70

Orange 500 / 300

Potato (dry) 280 / 180

Plum 700 / 500

Sweet Melon 230 / 120

Pepper (hot) 220 / 140

Pepper (sweet) 320 / 200

Portia 360 / 300

Pomegranate 350 / 250

Peaches 900 / 600

Tomato 140 / 80

Tasting beans 700 / 600

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:45 Beirut (RJ)

09:30 Abu Dhabi, Bangkok (RJ)

12:00 Damascus (RJ)

12:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)

13:45 London (RJ)

14:30 Frankfurt (RJ)

14:35 Cairo (RJ)

16:45 Moscow (RJ)

20:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)

21:00 Amsterdam, Montreal (RJ)

21:45 Dhahran (RJ)

22:00 Damascus (RJ)

22:30 Dubai (add) (RJ)

22:30 Al Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

22:30 Dubai, Moscow (RJ)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:00 Damascus (RJ)

09:30 Jeddah (RJ)

10:00 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:15 Riyadh (RJ)

11:00 Beirut (RJ)

11:00 New Delhi (RJ)

17:50 Cairo (RJ)

18:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

19:00 Bangkok (RJ)

19:30 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)

19:40 Sanaa (RJ)

06:45 Moscow (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:00 Khartoum (SD)

06:15 Istanbul (TK)

07:00 Beirut (ME)

12:00 Khartoum (SD)

14:30 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)

16:00 Sanaa (YV)

17:15 Cairo (MS)

19:30 Dubai (EM)

02:30 Amsterdam (KL)

Bosnian Serbs set for isolation

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Serbs voted for the second day Sunday in makeshift referendum expected to underline their defiant isolation by rejecting the latest plan to divide their republic.

International moves to confirm the quarantine of Bosnia's Serbs by posting observers on the Rump Yugoslavia border to oversee Belgrade's blockade of its former provinces were to continue with the arrival in the Serbian capital of Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev.

His meetings with Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic will be the first in a month by a leading politician from the five powers that drew up the peace plan.

Mr. Milosevic has joined the West and Russia in denouncing Bosnian Serb leaders for rejecting the peace deal, slapping a trade embargo on his ethnic kin whose 28-month war effort he inspired and actively supported.

Mr. Kozyrev is expected to offer Mr. Milosevic an easing of the sanctions — imposed on Rump Yugoslavia for backing Serbs in the ethnic conflict in neighbouring Bosnia — as a reward for cooperation in pressing for an end to the war.

Mr. Milosevic has so far refused to allow international monitors to check his blockade is thorough. A similar measure against Bosnia's Serbs announced in May 1993 proved a facade and international scepticism lingers.

Diplomats say if Mr. Milosevic agrees to 300-400 observers he can expect sporting and cultural links to resume and air traffic to restart in the first phase of sanctions relaxation. If he refuses sanctions will be tightened, they add.

The blockade of Bosnia has driven up fuel and food prices but Bosnian Serbs remained defiant as they voted in trenches, refugee centres and party offices in a referendum Belgrade has described as a farce.

Reuters journalists found no one who would admit to supporting the peace plan, seemingly confirming the predictions of its near unanimous rejection made by the leadership in Pale, the Serb stronghold outside Sarajevo.

Voting rules were lax. In a country where war and forced population movement has made electoral lists meaningless soldiers were seen voting by roll call rather than secret ballot and heads of families cast ballots for their kin.

Electoral organisers said a million people would vote in 82 polling stations, but independent observers suggest only 750,000 live in Serb-held Bosnia, with nearly half below voting age.

Referendum officials, ignoring the dispute over figures, said turnout has been high. First results were expected within 48 hours of polls closing.

Bosnian Serbs, a third of the pre-war population and now controlling 70 per cent of the country, say the proposed peace plan dividing Bosnia roughly in half between Serbs and a Muslim and Croat alliance forces them to give too much away.

They object to handing back to Muslims land won by their superior war machine and argue the plan involves dividing their territory, leaving it indefensible and economically weak, a position described by diplomats as illogical.

The referendum will worsen the Bosnian impasse, diplomats say, with no vote forcing reluctant Western nations to contemplate unpleasant measures to force peace on the Serbs.

U.S. President Bill Clinton has warned he will ask the Security Council to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia's

Muslim-led government, which has accepted the peace plan, if their Serb foes do not follow suit by mid-October.

European nations have said they will pull out their U.N. troops if the embargo ends, arguing it would spark a return to warfare that could endanger the peacekeepers' lives.

The U.N. warns any pull-out would be difficult and dangerous, leaving large Muslim populations unprotected from Serb attack, and requiring thousands of NATO troops on the ground, to safeguard the retreat.

Meanwhile international mediators stepped up efforts to persuade Muslim refugees from the fallen Bosnian rebel province of Bihać to return to their homes, the U.N. said Sunday.

Some 25,000 people fled last week from the northwest pocket to the neighbouring Serb-held Krajina region of Croatia after forces loyal to the Sarajevo government crushed an 11-month revolt by local leader Fikret Abdic.

They have refused to return to their homes in spite of Bosnian government assurances and an extension of an amnesty for Mr. Abdic's soldiers.

About 9,000 people are crammed into a no-man's-



A British U.N. soldier gestures towards the ruins of the Tito Bridge, a major landmark, which was destroyed by UNPROFOR forces.

The old bridge, which was the only connection across the River Neretva, will be replaced by a new one to be built by Spanish and British U.N. soldiers (AFP photo)

land between the Croatian army and Serb forces, demanding passage to Croatia.

U.N. spokesman Paul Risley said the situation was relatively calm and that an outbreak of shooting Saturday did not represent serious fighting.

The U.N. had reported some small arms fire exchanges in a part of the Bihać front line under Serb control, but could not say who was

responsible.

"Bosnian army Fifth Corps troops are in the area, but not making a large presence in the town of Velika Kladusa," the U.N. troops are patrolling the area," Mr. Risley said.

He said the head of U.N. civil affairs, Sergio De Mello, and the United States ambassador, Peter Galbraith, travelled Sunday to the former rebel stronghold for talks

with Bosnian government officials there.

"The purpose of their trip is to determine by inspection that the safety assurances for the return of the refugees currently in the (U.N.) sector north of Croatia will be met," Mr. Risley said. "It's a fact-finding mission to determine that security will be provided and that the refugees can return to their homes."

China accused of taking organs from the executed convicts for transplants

BEIJING (R) — An international human rights group accused China Monday of using organs from executed convicts for transplants without their consent and said some prisoners were kept alive until their organs had been removed.

The New York-based Human Rights Watch/Asia called on foreign governments to ban their citizens from obtaining transplants in China and urged foreign firms to stop taking part in state-sponsored organ-transplant programmes.

Testimony from Chinese and jurists indicate the practice of using the organs from executed prisoners was common, the group said in its report.

"An estimated 2,000 to 3,000 organs (mainly kidneys and corneas) from prisoners each year are used in this manner, with government officials reportedly receiving priority in their allocation," the group said.

Chinese judicial and health authorities declined comment on the report.

The group demanded China ban further use of prisoners' organs, allow the United Nations to investigate its executions and organ procurement procedures, and reverse an alarming trend toward the use of the death penalty.

Although required by law, the consent of prisoners is rarely sought, the group said. "The report clearly demonstrates how any notion of prisoner 'consent' to organ donation in China is absurd," the group said.

"The lack of judicial safeguards in China guarantees that many people will be wrongfully executed and become unwitting organ donors."

"Some executions are known to have been deliberately botched to ensure that prisoners were not yet dead when their organs were removed."

The use of condemned

prisoners' organs involves members of the medical profession in the actual execution process, in violation of international standards of medical ethics, the report said.

"Chinese doctors participate in pre-execution medical tests, matching of donors with recipients and scheduling of operations, often on a first-paid, first-served basis," the group said.

"Surgeons are commonly present at execution grounds to perform on-site removal of vital organs."

It said a 1984 Chinese government directive ordered that "the use of corpses or organs of executed criminals must be kept strictly secret."

China does not release figures for the number of executions it performs each year, but Western diplomats and monitoring groups estimate that well over 1,000 people annually are put to death by a shot in the back of the neck.

S. African politicians struggle to shed fat cat image

JOHANNESBURG (R) — African National Congress (ANC) parliamentarians, struggling to deliver on election promises of "a better life for all", are trying to justify fat salaries in the face of outrage from the South African public.

An ANC National Assembly member told Reuters Sunday they would set up a commission to look into the matter.

"It is an exaggeration that we are getting fat cat salaries. I am sure that the commission which will be appointed soon will prove that," he said.

MPs earn an annual package of 193,000 rand (\$33,000). They want a further 3,000 rand (\$830) constituency allowance.

Average incomes for factory workers range from 10,000 rand (\$3,600) to 36,000 rand (\$10,000) a year.

Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a Nobel Peace Prize winner for his stand against South Africa's former apartheid rulers, last weekend called politicians' salaries "excessive and horrible."

President Nelson Mandela — annual package 750,000 rand (\$208,000) — responded by telling parliament that recommendations on salaries would soon be put up for debate.

Seoul's crackdown on the left continues

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea is continuing its arrests of dissidents and leftists in the severest crackdown since dissident-turned-president Kim Young-Sam took power 18 months ago.

The crackdown, which has netted union leaders, professors and Socialists, has been confused by a disputed university president's claim that the dissident movement has been systematically infiltrated by North Korean-trained agents.

In all, arrest warrants have been issued for some 200 people in the past two months, making the roundup the harshest since Mr. Kim Young-Sam took office in February of 1993, when he enjoyed unprecedented popularity.

When he assumed the presidency, the dissident movement, whose main rallying cry had been the toppling of the country's military-backed rulers, seemed to have become "rebels without a cause," with every sign of dying a natural death.

University campuses were largely quiet and moderate voices were elected to student movements.

Then came the Uruguay round of international trade talks and the emotionally-charged issue of opening the country's domestic rice market, with tough contingents of farmers converging on major cities and infusing new life into the dwindling ranks of the extremists.

And just as a new unguarded freedom of discussion about North Korea blossomed with the approach of the first North-South summit between Kim Young-Sam and Kim Il-Sung, Kim Il-Sung died.

At first South Koreans were glued to their television screens watching rare live telecasts from the North and listening to the unprecedented sound of Radio Pyongyang broadcasting news of the ageing Stalinist leader's death.

Then the crackdown began.

Although Mr. Kim Young-Sam — and U.S. President Bill Clinton — expressed regret that the summit was off, others advocating condolences to the North, including some Southern opposition parliamentarians, were quickly silenced.

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Canada gun owners form political force

OTTAWA (R) — Canadian gun owners, aggravated over years of stringent controls, are forging a potent political force similar to the U.S. National Rifle Association to block tighter restrictions.

They are holding boisterous rallies across the country, joining mainstream political parties and speaking out in an attempt to shoot down plans for a new national gun registration system.

The gun defenders are working within political parties to soften support for the tougher gun laws, which are expected later this fall.

"It is a very strong lobby, most notably in Western Canada, said criminologist Neil Boyd at the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver,

British Columbia. The aggressive tactics by gun advocates is patterned after the well-organized pressure applied in the United States by the NRA, although the Canadian lobby is not as well-funded.

Spurred by several high-profile slayings, Canada's Liberal government is considering everything from a national gun registration system to an outright ban on handguns.

In the past, the gun lobby here for the most part has had little input as Canadian lawmakers forged some of the strictest gun control laws in the world.

But the number of new anti-gun control groups has

increased, with each determined to divide politicians before any new laws pass parliament.

"We have seen the number of new gun organisations almost double the last few months," said Wendy Cuckier, president of the lobby group, Coalition for Gun Control.

"The gun lobby is not as powerful as the NRA in the U.S., but it certainly has influence out of proportion to its members," she said.

Prime minister Jean Chretien has promised tougher laws to control the estimated six million rifles and shotguns in the country and the more than one million restricted weapons such as handguns and semi-automatic rifles.

Murayama visits Singapore's memorial for World War II victims

SINGAPORE (R) — Visiting Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama laid a wreath Sunday at a memorial to victims of Japan's World War II occupation of Singapore.

He honoured slain civilians half a century after Japan's military seized the island — now an independent city-state — from its British colonial rulers in a regional conquest.

Mr. Murayama went to the memorial soon after arriving in Singapore, concluding a four-nation South East Asian tour.

Japanese officials said he was their first premier to visit the 230-ft (70-metre) high monument, Singapore's tallest and built in 1965. It holds the ashes of some of the civilians killed by Japanese troops during the 1942-1945 occupation.

The monument's four

tapering white columns are designed to symbolise Singapore's main racial groups — Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians — but locals have taken to referring to them irreverently as "the chopsticks."

Mr. Murayama observed a one-minute silence as he laid a wreath, of white orchids, yellow chrysanthemum and white daisies.

He briefly toured the structure, observed silence again and signed a visitors' book before completing his 10-minute visit. He did not pen any message in the book.

Singapore's Foreign Minister S. Jayakumar and representatives of Singapore's Chambers of Commerce and Industry were present.

Mr. Jayakumar told reporters that Mr. Murayama's visit was a significant move by the Japanese leader. "I think Singaporeans will appreciate

the gesture," he said.

On Wednesday, Takako Doi, speaker of Japan's parliament and a member of Mr. Murayama's Social Democratic Party, laid a yellow and white wreath at the memorial.

Mr. Murayama, accompanied by his daughter Yuri Nakahara and a 60-member delegation, was earlier met on arrival at Changi Airport by Singapore's Trade and Industry Minister Yeo Cheow Tong.

He will meet Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong Monday morning after an official welcome at the Istana (palace), and will also call on President Ong Teng Cheong and Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew before leaving for home Tuesday.

Mr. Murayama in an interview in Singapore's Straits Times newspaper Saturday expressed "deep remorse" over Japan's wartime past.

Mexican vote changes politics in strife-torn state

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (R) — Mexico's recent elections opened the door for the strife-torn southern state of Chiapas to enter the nation's political mainstream and avoid future bloodshed, political analysts say.

Most election observers agreed last week's vote was the first generally democratic election ever held in Chiapas, where the self-styled Zapatista Army for National Liberation launched a rebellion New Year's Day to demand democracy and economic help.

"This was the first real election here, before this elections here were a joke," said Cesar Chavez, the campaign manager for Amado Avendaño, the losing gubernatorial candidate of the opposition Democratic Revolution Party (PRD).

Past elections here were marred by blatant fraud, according to analysts. The PRI rolled to at least 90 per cent of the vote in nearly every previous vote despite the area's rampant poverty, illiteracy and human rights abuses.

Last week, thousands of poor Indians turned out to vote for the first time, including voters in areas controlled by the Mayan Indian Zapatistas.

Like the rest of Mexico, Chiapas voted for ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) candidate Ernesto Zedillo, according to official results.

But for the first time here, an opposition party garnered a significant vote. The left-of-centre PRD won 34 per cent of the vote in the state governor's race and a handful of municipal elections.

"Having democratic elections (in Chiapas) helps channel political discontent in the state," political commentator Sergio Sarmiento told Reuters.

"That should avoid having dissatisfaction build until it boils over in violence," Election observers said the Chiapas vote was still plagued by irregularities. PRD officials believe Mr. Avendaño won the state race and said they will prevent the PRI's winning candidate, Eduardo Robledo, from taking office in December.

Many observers complained of intimidation and coercion of voters by the PRI in villages throughout the state.

Residents of the town of Oxchuc told Reuters the town mayor threatened to expel anyone from town who voted against the PRI. The town voted for the PRD, according to official results.

Despite the irregularities, most observers agree the vote marked a big step for a state languishing on Mexico's fringes, its lush landscapes and poor Indians more reminiscent of neighbouring Guatemala than the rest of Mexico.

"Until now, Chiapas was the bastard of Mexico where

any abuse was tolerated as long as the PRI got votes," said U.S. anthropologist Ronald Nigh, who has studied the region's large Indian groups for 25 years.

Tens of thousands of Mexicans massed in Mexico City's central Zocalo Square Saturday in a show of support for centre-left presidential candidate Cuernavaca Cardenas, who claims last Sunday's presidential elections were marred by massive fraud.

The peaceful demonstration of about 50,000 people took place hours after official results gave victory in the presidential race to Mr. Zedillo with 48.87 per cent of the vote.

The results made Mr. Zedillo likely to become Mexico's first president in at least 65 years to come to power with less than 50 per cent of the vote.

The results, based on returns from 291 of the country's 300 electoral districts, put Diego Fernandez de Cevallos of the conservative National Action Party (PAN) second with 26.09 per cent of the vote and Mr. Cardenas of the centre-left Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) third with 16.42 per cent.

Six smaller parties and spoiled ballots accounted for the remainder of the vote.

Mr. Cardenas, who has said the PRD was cheated out of millions of votes by fraud last Sunday, called on his supporters to eschew violence and concentrate on leg-

al challenges to the election result, which he called "scandalous."

"Today we cannot claim victory, but neither can we recognise the victory of anyone else," he said.

He told the rally, which Mr. Cardenas supporters said was about half the size of his closing campaign rally of more than 100,000 people two weeks ago, that the PRD would not carry out sit-in protests, takeovers of government buildings or marches as in the past, in order not to invite government repression.

"We do not want violence," he said.

Instead, Mr. Cardenas proposed legal challenges to the results of more than half of the 96,000 voting centres used in the election and the establishment of "truth commissions" across the country to document fraud against the PRD.

Mr. Cardenas was widely seen as the biggest loser in Sunday's poll, in which most election observers said irregularities were not big enough to have affected the result.

A protest against fraud which he called last Monday in the same Zocalo Square attracted only about 15,000 people and Saturday's turnout also appeared to confirm the view of many analysts that Mr. Cardenas has not convinced most Mexicans the elections were hugely fraudulent.

Film on my life fake India's 'bandit queen'

NEW DELHI (R) — A woman handist whose story inspired a celebrated Indian film on Hindu caste brutality and exploitation of women says much of the movie is not based on facts and accuses its makers of exploiting her. "I wish they had killed me before they made the film," Phoolan Devi told Reuters. Bandit Queen, a movie on the 38-year-old woman recently freed on parole, was hailed at the Cannes and Edinburgh Film Festivals as a historic departure in Indian cinema. "With Bandit Queen, Indian cinema comes of age," said London's Evening Standard when it was shown at Cannes in May. "The way Italian cinema did in post-war years with Bicycle Thief of Japanese cinema with Seven Samurai in the 1950's. But Bandit Queen, shown to select audiences in Delhi this month, has yet to get a censor's certificate for release in India. Ms. Phoolan says she will oppose it. "I will appeal to the High Court to stop the censors from passing the film," she said, accusing director Shekhar Kapur and producer Sandeep Singh Bedi of dishonesty. Both say the movie is based on Ms. Phoolan's confessions to Mala Sen, who became a close friend in long meetings during Ms. Phoolan's 11 years in jail, and wrote a book and film script. She says the film is littered with factual errors, though she does not deny the mass rape which is central to its story. Ms. Phoolan has not seen the film and says Bedi and Kapur do not want to show it to her. "They have shown me naked to the press. People come to me and say I look very sexy. I find all this humiliating," she said in a weekend interview.

Japan's Hitachi claims tiniest video camera

TOKYO (R) — A Japanese electronics maker has developed the world's smallest video camera which can sit comfortably on the palm of a hand, the Yomiuri Shimbun reported Sunday. Hitachi Ltd made the prototype camera using a semiconductor chip instead of tape to store the video data. Chips have been used before in still electronic cameras, but the quantity of data needed to record moving pictures had previously made this impractical for video. Hitachi's camera uses compression techniques to squash the amount of data to one hundredth its original volume, then stores it on a 400-megabyte semiconductor memory — equivalent to 10,000 newspaper pages. This enables it to record 30 minutes of video. The company hopes advances in chip technology will help it reduce the camera's weight below 300 grammes (11 ounces). The camera, however, will not be on the market for another five years, when it should cost around 100,000 to 150,000 yen (\$1,000 to 1,500).

Rude Russian bootlegs shock romantic novelist

LONDON (R) — Romantic writer Barbara Cartland is aghast that Russian publishers have spiced up her cozy novels by adding erotic pictures, Sunday's People newspaper said. "They are cheap, disgusting and appalling contrivances," the prolific British author said of the pirated hardback editions. The books, with pictures of pouting nude women on the covers and inside, are being snapped up by Russians who expect a saucy read but instead get tame tales of romance full of glances and odd kisses, but no steamy encounters, the paper said. "They must think that the only thing that sells is hot sex but they are wrong," said 92-year-old Dame Barbara, step-grandmother of Britain's Princess Diana.

Saudi hires British butler but says no jokes

LONDON (R) — A Saudi Arabian millionaire hired a British butler for what was billed as a world-record salary — but he will be sacked if he tells any jokes. The butler, who also had to be a single man, was hired for an annual tax-free salary of 125,000 from the Ivor Spencer Butler Academy. The Saudi, whose name was not revealed, apparently had grown tired of his previous wisecracking butler and wanted some straight-faced service from now on.

By-election is first test for Japan's LDP-Socialist pact

NAGOYA, Japan (R) — Japanese voters will get their first chance next month in a by-election in the industrial heartland to pass judgement on a confusing year of machinations and mergers among Tokyo's political elite.

As ruling and opposition coalitions square off for the symbolic Sept. 11 contest, they face, however, a common enemy: Voter indifference and disgust in a poll that media surveys suggest will attract a 40 per cent turnout at best.

"We are literally both in the same boat with this election," said former Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata, who came to Nagoya with fellow opposition heavyweights on a train carrying ministers campaigning for the ruling party. The 17-day contest has

national politicians stampeding to Nagoya — a city often disparaged in jokes as an insignificant stop on the bullet train line between Tokyo and Osaka.

The by-election is to fill a seat for Aichi prefecture in Japan's upper house of parliament. The incumbent was stripped of his seat in July after it was discovered he falsified his academic record in his victorious 1992 campaign.

Both camps are betting that as goes Aichi, home to Toyota Motor Corporation and other world class manufacturers, so will go Japan in a series of elections in the next year.

"Far beyond sending a representative to the capital from Aichi, this election will determine whether reform in

Japan moves forward or falters," former Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa said on Aug. 25.

Not too far away, Foreign Minister Yohei Kono, who heads the ruling coalition partner Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), opened his candidate's campaign by blasting the opposition groups for "waving a banner of reforms they can't deliver."

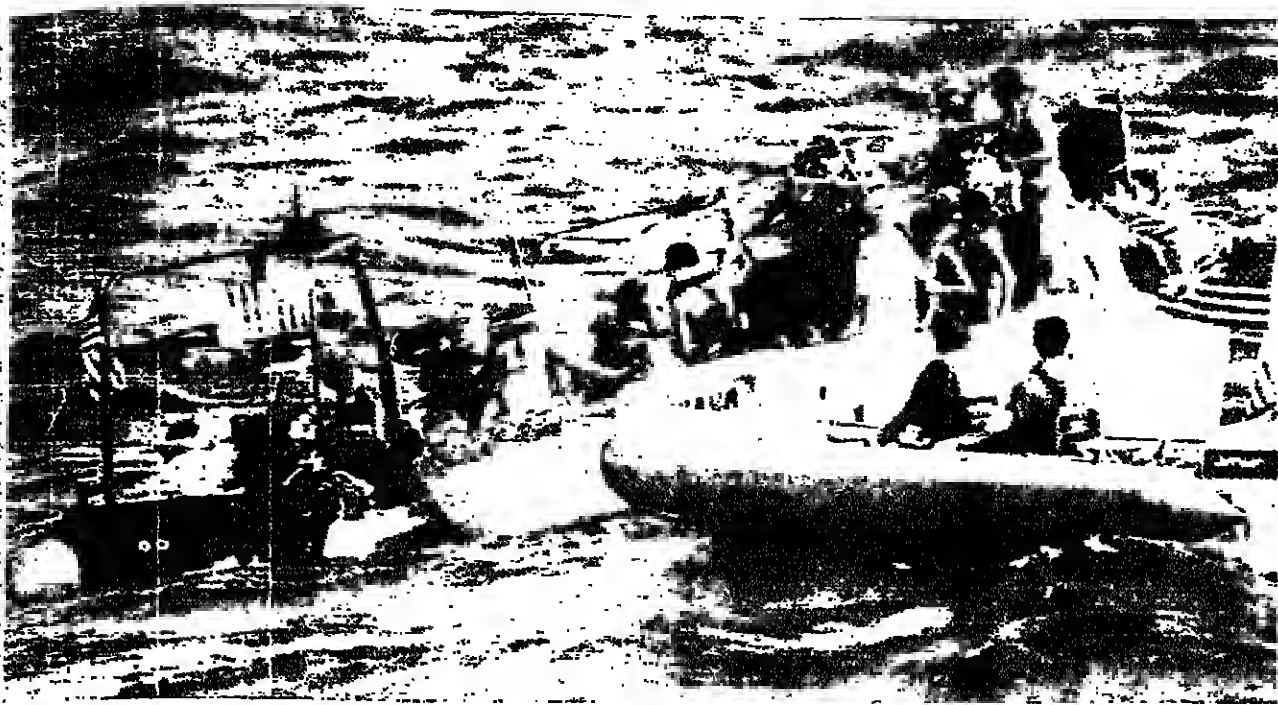
He said the LDP and its Socialist coalition partners would produce "steady, step-by-step reforms as a responsible government."

With both sides offering vague messages, however, the most the Aichi campaign is likely to offer is a verdict on the political marriages that have taken place in recent months.

NEW DELHI (R) — A woman bandit who inspired a celebrated film on Hindu caste wars and exploitation of women based on facts and anecdotes of exploiting women before they made the Phoolan Devi movie, a 38-year-old woman recently freed on parole, said at the Cannes film festival.

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U.S. Coast Guard crew members in Zodiac boats rescue Cuban refugees from a wooden boat in high seas off Cuba. The number of Cubans picked up at sea by the U.S. Coast Guard diminished due to worsening weather from a tropical storm in the Florida Straits (AFP photo)

Cuba accepts U.S. invitation to discuss migration

HAVANA (Agencies) — Cuba officially accepted Saturday a U.S. invitation to talks on migration next week, and made a point of leaving the door open to discussing anything else that might be of bilateral interest.

The announcement made by the state television network's new service underscored that "as it is well known, Cuba firmly maintains that the problem of illegal emigration by rafters" which developed in recent weeks will not be resolved simply with formal migratory solutions.

President Fidel Castro has blamed the exodus on 32-year-old U.S. economic embargo on Havana.

The televised announcement said "the rigorous economic blockade, toughened by the Torricelli Law and new measures taken recently against the people of Cuba, constitute the fundamental factor, in current international circumstances, fostering mass migration towards the United States and which must be resolved," the statement said.

"Nonetheless, the government of Cuba does not refuse to hold discussions on any issue that might be of interest for either of the two countries," it added.

More than 17,000 Cubans trying to sail to Florida on makeshift boats were picked up by the U.S. Coast Guard this month.

Earlier in the day, a Cuban Foreign Ministry spokesman said the new U.S. sanctions against Cuba which came into force Friday simply have aggravated tensions between Washington and Havana.

Spokesman Miguel Alfonso described relations between the two countries as "particularly strained," adding that they were at their lowest level in 25 years.

Mr. Clinton last week tightened U.S. sanctions on Havana ending the flow of U.S. dollars into Cuba, increasing charter travel restrictions, stepping up pressure on Cuban human rights issues at the United Nations and increasing anti-Castro radio broadcasts into Cuba.

The new sanctions on Havana could deprive Cuba of up to \$150 million annually and may also reduce by 80 to 90 per cent the estimated 50,000 U.S. visitors to Cuba each year, a senior U.S. official said.

The number of Cuban emigrants picked up by the U.S. Coast Guard in the Florida Straits was down sharply for the day to 130 as of late Saturday, a Coast Guard spokesman said.

Officials said rough weather in the area was at least partly responsible for the "drop-off in departures."

The Cuban president may be weakened by the Communist-ruled island's economic woes but his 35-year-old regime is not about to crumble, U.S.-based

analysts say.

The experts also estimate that President Clinton could well serve out his four-year term without seeing the bearded leader's demise.

"The U.S. is betting on that widespread popular uprisings will break out against Castro but that is unlikely to happen," said Piero Gleijeses, foreign policy professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

Prof. Gleijeses told Reuters there were several factors which keep shoring up Mr. Castro despite Cuba's economic collapse.

"Even though it has weakened over the past few years, the revolution still enjoys substantial support among the people in Cuba," he said. "Castro also gave them their first truly independent government, so there's nationalism involved."

Mr. Castro came to power in 1959 after leading the revolution that toppled military strongman Fulgencio Batista.

Since then he has survived U.S.-backed coup attempts and 32 years of a U.S. economic embargo that has starved it of American trade, investments and tourism.

Prof. Gleijeses also listed the Communist leader's deep social reforms, which gave Cuba one of the highest literacy rates and best public health systems in the hemisphere.

"There is also the question of Castro's charisma, which has suffered as of late but is basically still there. On the other hand, people in Cuba hold a very negative view of the U.S.-based right-wing

leaders of the exiled Cubans," he added.

Harvard University Professor Jorge Dominguez said in a Friday teleconference with reporters in Washington that Mr. Castro was much weaker now than at any time in previous decades.

Earlier this summer Cuba saw its first massive, daylight anti-government street protest in decades and a wave of ship hijacking conducted at gunpoint — which suggest to Prof. Dominguez that the Communists are losing their grip.

Also, the regime that was founded on the expropriation of foreign property was now eagerly courting foreign investors and had allowed Cubans to hold U.S. dollars.

Prof. Dominguez, however, said he did not see Cuban communism crumbling in the next one or even two years.

"To base U.S. policy on the assumption that Castro will crumble is wrong," he said. "Castro is now pursuing a policy of exporting the opposition, as he did successfully in the 1960s and the 1980s," he added.

Another leading U.S. expert on Cuba, the Centre for International Policy's Wayne Smith, said tens of thousands of Cuba dissidents may flow out of the island due to the tough policies adopted by Mr. Clinton against Mr. Castro's government.

Mr. Smith also ridiculed the United States' mention that it might consider imposing a naval blockade against Cuba.

"That would be impossible. Imagine trying to stop Canadian or French ships from reaching Cuba. It's silly," he added.

Former U.S. Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Elliot Abrams, now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, said that it was difficult to say how long Mr. Castro could last.

"The end is closer, but that does not tell us whether it will take six months or six years," the conservative analyst told Reuters.

However, Mr. Abrams said, Mr. Clinton would stage a major political victory if he presided over Mr. Castro's fall.

"The problem is that this administration cannot decide whether it wants to bring Castro down or not," he added.

Rwandans shoot returning refugee

KIGALI (R) — Troops of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) shot and killed a refugee returning home in a U.N. convoy as he tried to escape from them, a U.N. military spokesman said Sunday.

Soldiers of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) detained the refugee at a checkpoint on the edge of the U.N. "safe zone" in southwestern Rwanda late Saturday when a convoy of five British army trucks carrying 200 Hutu refugees home crossed into RPF territory.

U.N. military spokesman Major Jean-Guy Plante told reporters that the man fled his captors and was pursued by about 15 RPF soldiers. Five bursts of automatic gunfire were heard and the soldier returned saying they had killed the man.

The man was apparently suspected of involvement in the massacres of Tutsis earlier this year. The U.N. estimates some one million people were killed in a systematic campaign of genocide launched by the former government against Rwanda's minority.

Maj. Plante said another

three men from the convoy were detained at the checkpoint, some 40 kilometres east of the lakeside border town of Kibuye, and the U.N. was trying to discover their whereabouts.

"This man was fleeing and in these situations, if someone runs you shoot," Maj. Plante said.

"The RPF has the right to arrest, search or detain someone they suspect of crimes. They have the right to take whatever security measure they deem appropriate to protect themselves and all law-abiding citizens."

Maj. Plante admitted that the situation was embarrassing for the U.N. but said no formal protest would be made.

But he said the U.N. would review its procedures for repatriation in the light of the shooting. Each day about 1,000 are taken back voluntarily in U.N. trucks.

The U.N. has distributed leaflets in refugee camps to try to assure about 1.2 million Hutu refugees in Zaire and 500,000 people displaced inside Rwanda that it is safe to go back home following the end of the civil war that

began in April.

"We are telling everyone there is nothing to fear, but that is a broad assurance," Maj. Plante said.

"I am not going to tell a guy who has committed massacres that he has nothing to fear. He knows that if he comes back, he will have to face the music."

The defeated Hutu government, booted up in eastern Zaire, has launched its own campaign of propaganda and intimidation to keep the Hutu refugees with them in exile, telling them they will be slaughtered by the RPF if they return.

The RPF has checkpoints on all roads into the country, and out of the safe zone established in southwest Rwanda by French troops in June and now manned by U.N. African peacekeepers.

RPF soldiers crosscheck returnees against a list of names and photographs of those allegedly implicated in the massacres.

People suspected of acts of genocide have been arrested. The new government also told the U.N. last week that elements of the RPF had

been guilty of revenge killings and 64 soldiers had been arrested for such offences.

Both the government and the U.N. have been trying to stop reprisals in order to encourage the huge number of refugees to return and help rebuild the shattered central African country.

Zaire's justice and defence ministers flew to the eastern border town of Gombe Sunday for a meeting with a delegation from the new Rwandan government which was expected to centre on the refugees on Zairean soil.

Members of the Zairean team said the meeting was due to start at 2.00 p.m. (1200 GMT), but they had received no news of the whereabouts of the Rwandan ministers who were expected to cross from the border town of Gisenyi.

So many returnees arriving daily in the Rwandan capital Kigali has created a fresh refugee problem in the city.

Maj. Plante said many returnees were reporting to former refugee sites — the Amahoro Stadium and the Sainte Famille Religious Complex — hoping to be accommodated there.

Greece tightens controls at Albanian border

KSAMIL, Albania (R) — Greece has tightened controls at its sea and land borders with Albania after expelling thousands of illegal Albanian immigrants last week, Albanians living near frontier posts said Sunday.

Albanians deported from Greece in the past few days said it was dangerous to cross the southern Albanian border as Greek special police forces had begun to open fire without warning.

Some said Greece had deployed patrol boats in the narrow channel separating the Albanian coast from the Greek island of Corfu and it was now impossible to make the crossing.

"You have to be an idiot to try and cross to Corfu at the moment. You can be killed," said Kristo Nano, who lives in the coastal town of Ksamili, 300 kilometres south of Tirana.

Mr. Nano was deported back to Albania Saturday but had already weighed up the chances of returning to Greece via Corfu early Sunday.

The Albanian government said Sunday Greece had deported 24,000 illegal Albanian immigrants since Aug. 15 in retaliation for the trial in Tirana of five ethnic Greek Albanians accused of spying for Athens.

The influx had eased Saturday with only some 2,000 people arriving at border points from Greece, officials said.

An estimated 350,000 Albanians work in Greece, earning cash for families scraping by in Europe's poorest country.

Thousands of immigrants have crossed the two kilometre-wide channel between Albania and Corfu since the Communist regime in Tirana fell in 1990 and the borders of Europe's most isolated state were flung open.

Most crossed the channel in small rowing boats but budding Albanian entrepreneurs had bought speed boats to ferry immigrants to Corfu for a price.

A Reuters reporter in Ksamili could see two Greek helicopters hovering over the Corfu coast, which local people said had never happened before.

Ksamili residents said Greek authorities had this year returned seven Albanian corpses to Ksamili of people who had tried to cross the border or had died on Greek territory.

Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu and President Constantine Karamanlis discussed tightening borders and stepping up expulsion, Greek government sources said last week.

The latest deportations were the biggest since July last year when a quarrel between the two Balkan neighbours erupted over Albania's expulsion of a Greek cleric whom Tirana accused of fomenting separatism in the country's ethnic Greeks live.

Greece accuses Tirana of mistreating its Greek minority.

At least 50 dead in Moldovan flood

CHISINAU (R) — Severe flooding in the former Soviet Republic of Moldova has killed at least 50 people and caused colossal damage, Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli said Sunday.

The central part of the republic has already been declared a disaster zone and the death toll looks set to rise as rescuers reach more villages.

"The damage and the ruins are colossal," Mr. Sangheli said in a radio address.

The republic was plunged into mourning Sunday, just a day after celebrating the third anniversary of its independence from the former Soviet Union.

Moldovan tricolour flags, with black ribbons attached, flew at half-mast from most buildings in the capital Chisinau. Radio and television stations broadcast funeral liturgies from local churches.

The flood, caused by sever-

al days of torrential rain, swept through the central Hincesti region on Friday night.

Local residents said the river Prut rose five metres (16 feet) in a few hours. The rain was totally unexpected, since Moldova has been suffering a severe drought throughout the summer.

Mr. Sangheli said rescuers were finding five or six bodies in virtually every village that had been hit by floods, the latest in a string of natural disasters to strike the southwestern republic this year.

Floodwaters remain high and the heavy rain lashing central regions is forecast to continue until at least Monday.

One village, Caprimeni, was completely cut off because all roads and bridges in the area had been destroyed.

"We will have to reach the village of Caprimeni. I think

there are dead people there as well," said Mr. Sangheli.

President Mircea Snegur Saturday instructed the Foreign Ministry to appeal for aid from abroad.

Other former Soviet republics have already offered to help. Belarus says it will send temporary housing to help resettle the homeless by the onset of winter.

Moldovans are still reeling from the unprecedented drought, which has cost agriculture at least \$140 million, and a tornado which ripped through several northern regions on Aug. 11, killing three people and injuring 30 more.

Officials said the tornado had also caused around \$140 million worth of damage. Mr. Sangheli said a special commission had been set up to estimate the cost of the floods.

North rejects S. Korean reactors

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea hinted this weekend that it would strongly reject a dominant role by South Korea in an international bid to provide safer reactors for its suspected nuclear programme.

Instead, Pyongyang said the issue should be settled in negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang.

"From the outset we did not give any consideration to the South Korean LWR (light water reactor)," the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a commentary monitored late Saturday night.

The commentary was interpreted here as Pyongyang's outright rejection of South Korea's conditional offer to supply light-water reactors that produce less plutonium than graphite-moderated models.

"It could be interpreted as Pyongyang's formal rejection, even though it was just carried as commentary," said a monitor at South Korea's official Naewoo Press.

The comment, monitors here appeared to show a hardening of Pyongyang's stance towards Seoul ahead

of technical talks to be held Saturday between Pyongyang and Washington.

The KCNA dispatch coincided with report of a Russian suggestion that Moscow supply technology, facilities and experts for the construction of new reactors in North Korea.

Radio Moscow, monitored Saturday by Naewoo, quoted a Russian Foreign Ministry official as saying that North Korea wanted to introduce Russian reactors.

South Korea may be able to finance the building, but it would be extremely difficult for the North to accept the participation of South Korean nuclear experts, the official was quoted as saying.

Japan wants a fund to be established by the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialised nations and other countries for the reactors, with details to be worked out before the U.S. and North Korea resume high-level talks Sept. 23, the Yomiuri Shimbun said.

In the Aug. 12 statement in Geneva, North Korea pledged to freeze its nuclear programme and in return Washington said it would

arrange to provide light-water reactors.

South Korea offered to provide the reactors on condition that Pyongyang open up two undeclared nuclear facilities to inspection. But North Korea angrily refused to allow inspectors into the two unreported sites, suspected of storing plutonium.

On Friday, South Korean Ambassador Han Seung-soo said in Washington that South Korea should play a central role in providing reactors to North Korea, describing special inspections as a key to settlement of the nuclear dispute.

U.S. officials said the Geneva statement envisioned special inspections. But Mr. Han said Pyongyang and Washington left "a planned ambiguity" in the statement.

"The issue of the provision of the LWR is, to all intents and purposes, a matter that must be settled between (North Korea) and the United States, which does not allow the South Korean authorities to obtrusively interfere," KCNA said.

It acknowledged that North Korea had discussed the reactor issue

Khmer Rouge claims 'liberation' of 50 villages

BANGKOK (Agencies) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas claimed Sunday to have "liberated" more than 50 villages immediately north of Cambodia's second city, Battambang.

In a broadcast monitored in Bangkok, Khmer Rouge radio said the "mopping-up operation" launched Saturday would continue in the direction of Battambang, where essential supply lines were disrupted.

On Saturday, officials in Phnom Penh said 100 guerrillas in boats had attacked the heavily-flooded town of Ansaug Sork, some 10 kilometres (six miles) north of Battambang, killing two soldiers and wounding eight.

But government forces secured the town a few hours later, the officials said.

Khmer Rouge radio claimed the guerrillas had moved to within five kilometres of Battambang Saturday, when they entered Dam Teav.

It said the attack took place along the S'ung Angker River from I k p p to Daun Teav, the "liberation" of half of Battam' and 52 other vil

as 90,000 Khmer inhabitants.

Half of the normal supplies for Battambang were prevented from reaching the city in the wake of the attack, the radio said.

The government had insufficient forces in the area — "only a handful of several dozen administrative, police and military personnel to defend the villages" — and 109 of them had surrendered and sworn loyalty to the Khmer Rouge, the radio said.

A substantial number of Khmer Rouge soldiers have defected to the government this month in a southern province where the guerrillas are holding three Westerners hostage, Defence Minister Tea Chamrath said Saturday.

A government commander at the scene told the Associated Press that more than 50 guerrillas had defected, including ten Friday after government troops bombarded their bases with light artillery fire.

Australian David Wilson, 29, Briton Mark Slater, 28, and Frenchman Jean Michel Braquet, 27, were kidnapped on July 26 after Khmer Rouge guerrillas ambushed the train on which they were

travelling, killing 13 passengers and wounding 20 others.

The three have spent the past month in a guerrilla hideout at the foot of Voar, or Vine, Mountain, in Kampot province about 150 kilometres south of Phnom Penh.

The government reinforced the province with up to 3,000 extra soldiers and 1,000 police this month.

"I heard this morning that a lot of Khmer Rouge defected to us because they don't like Mr. Paet," Mr. Tea Chamrath told the Associated Press.

General Paet is the local commander of the Khmer Rouge force holding the hostages.

Khmer Rouge guerrillas who clashed with government troops Friday may have been attempting to move the hostages to a stronghold on the Thai border, a government spokesman said.

"Less than 20 or 30 Khmer Rouge tried to cross Route Three and there was some fighting," Secretary of State for Information Khieu Kanharith said Saturday. Route 3 is the main highway from Phnom Penh to the coastal province of Kampot.



Crew members from the U.S. Coast Guard transferred to a navy ship off the coast of Cuba. Cutter Gallatin help a Cuban refugee who was picked up at sea down the ship's ladder to be (AFP photo)

Balladur popularity soars as Delors keeps own counsel

PARIS (AFP) — The popularity of French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur reached a new high in August with 63 per cent of the electorate happy with his performance, according to an opinion poll published Sunday.

The rise of five points in the monthly IFOP poll carried out for the Journal Du Dimanche made Mr. Balladur the most popular premier since the poll began in February 1993, with an average of 53.4 per cent since his

appointment in April last year.

The new will be a blow to mayor of Paris Jacques Chirac, expected to be Mr. Balladur's rival in the battle to win the endorsement of the right-wing coalition parties for their candidate in next May's presidential election.

It was also expected to add spice to this weekend's meeting of Socialists of the Temoin (Witness) faction headed by outgoing Euro-

pean Commission President Jacques Delors.

Mr. Delors, who steps down as the European Union's chief official at the end of this year, is under pressure to declare himself ready to be the Socialist candidate to succeed President Francois Mitterrand.

He is seen as the only Socialist likely to win the election, but, like Mr. Balladur, says he will make no statement before January.

Mr. Delors arrived for the Temoin conference in Lorient, Brittany, Saturday, but it was uncertain if he would even address it. Let alone give any hint as to his intentions.

Temoin Chairman Francois Hollande told the television channel France 2 late Saturday that Mr. Delors would be prompted to run for president only if the right's candidate seriously threatened European unity or social democracy.

German SPD chooses campaign shadow cabinet

BONN (R) — German opposition Social Democratic (SPD) leader Rudolf Scharping unveils a shadow cabinet Monday for October elections, amid speculation it will include his chief party rival, but he remained tight-lipped on the team.

Mr. Scharping declined comment Sunday on ministerial candidates he has hand-picked for the final seven weeks of campaigning against Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Weekend news reports said the cabinet list included the ambitious premier of northern Lower Saxony state, Gerhard Schroeder, who lost a bitter race for the SPD chairmanship to Mr. Scharping last year.

"I am not going to talk about names in advance," Mr. Scharping, himself a state premier in southwestern Rhineland-Palatinate, told German Radio.

Mr. Scharping, 47, said he had good relations with the 50-year-old Schroeder, who is widely expected to renew his bid for the chairmanship if the SPD loses to Mr. Kohl on Oct. 16.

Mr. Schroeder and Saar State Premier Oskar Lafontaine, who SPD officials tipped as the candidate for finance minister, are among the most powerful leaders of the often quarrelsome party.

Bringing both men into the core campaign team could give Mr. Scharping a badly-

needed boost to recover from a slump in recent opinion polls.

Mr. Scharping started his campaign early this year ahead of Mr. Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU) in opinion polls based on a campaign against record unemployment and Germany's worst recession since World War II.

But economic recovery since mid-year has stolen some of the wind from his sails, dropping the SPD to between 35 and 37 per cent in August polls behind the CDU at 41 to 43 per cent.

A survey in the weekly Bild Am Sonntag said more Germans would back the energetic Schroeder against

Kohl than Mr. Scharping. In a survey of 2,000 Germans carried out last week, the Sunday paper said 30 per cent would vote for Mr. Scharping, 41 per cent for Mr. Kohl and 29 per cent for neither if the chancellor were directly elected. Ballotting in Germany is for parties.

Mr. Schroeder however would score 44 per cent against 34 per cent for Mr. Kohl, who has led a centre-right coalition since 1982.

News reports said Mr. Scharping would name Mr. Schroeder either for a new "super" ministry combining energy and transport or for a portfolio covering economics, technology and transport.

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Another milestone

TODAY MARKS another milestone in the Palestinian-Israeli peace relations when both sides sign the painstakingly negotiated accord on extending Palestinian self-rule to the rest of the West Bank. Under the so-called "early empowerment" accord hammered out in Egypt, Israel is supposed to hand over control over education, health, taxation, tourism and social welfare. These five spheres of control are not as inconsequential as they may appear at first glance. For all intents and purposes these newly-added authorities could pave the way for additional Palestinian sovereignty rights.

The most immediate result of today's signature of the accord on extended Palestinian authority, though, could be the setting of the stage for the redeployment of Israeli troops in the remaining Palestinian territories in preparation for Palestinian national elections scheduled to take place before the end of this year. Agreement on conditions under which such envisaged Palestinian elections could be held would be the real test of Israeli intentions on the future course of the Palestinian-Israeli peace front. The PLO is demanding and rightly so that Palestinian self-rule "parliamentary" elections be held freely. As long as Israeli soldiers are patrolling Palestinian cities and towns, any such elections would be a suspect. That is why an agreement on the "redeployment" of Israeli military personnel in the occupied areas is so essential to the success of the PLO-Israeli peace talks.

Still this would be only one side of the equation. An equally important dimension is the level of the PLO's adherence to pluralistic democracy and human rights when conducting the projected elections. It is perhaps too early for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to observe fully international norms on human rights since its authority is still at the embryonic stage and it has yet to consolidate its grip on power. Yet it is never too early to start the process of Palestinian democracy and respect for human rights especially when it comes to freedom of the press.

The PNA record is already blemished by the unexplained death of a Palestinian detainee and the closure of two newspapers. We trust these violations are mere aberrations and are not samples of more similar disrespect for human rights. The PLO is surely aware more than anybody else that it is constantly under the international microscope which can be expected to continue probing into Palestinian conduct on all levels. The upcoming Palestinian national elections must therefore be free from both Israeli presence and duress as well as from Palestinian disregard for international standards on human rights.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Sunday demanded a closer measure of coordination of policies among Arab countries in general and between the Palestinian and Jordanians in particular in matters concerning the repatriation and compensation of the Palestinian refugees. Forty six years have elapsed since the start of the refugees tragedy but nothing has been done to serve them justice in implementation of U.N. resolutions, simply because Israel has been adamant in refusing to return the refugees to their homeland and due to the strong backing for such policy Israel has been getting from Western nations, said the paper. But, said the paper, despite the past 46 years of displacement and despite the U.S.-Israeli-British policies of incorporating the refugees in the neighbouring Arab states, the refugees question continues to be among the major sources of conflict in the Middle East. According to UNRWA figures, the number of refugees in Jordan alone has now risen to 1.93 million, of whom 20.5 per cent live in camps and Jordan has been shouldering additional economic political and social burdens since the 1948 war, said the paper. The international legitimacy, said the paper, remains only on paper as long as the question of the Palestinian refugees remains outstanding.

A COLUMBIANIST in Al Dastour tackled the question of unemployment, blaming its rising volume on the presence of guest workers in the Kingdom. Mere calls on businesses to expand or hope for new ones to open to provide opportunities is not enough as long as the labour market remains in chaos, said Mohammad Doud. It is not enough to force the non-Jordanians to abide by the Jordanian laws and pay the fees for their work permits. What is needed is to force all businesses to give priority in employment to Jordanians, said the writer. No guest worker should be employed unless the Ministry of Labour is well assured that Jordanians cannot fill the vacancy, said the writer.

Human Rights File

Abortion controversy to dominate the agenda of Cairo conference

THERE IS no doubt that the issue of abortion will dominate the discussions in the September World Conference on Population and Development. It is no accident that Cairo is hosting this highly important meeting since Egypt has one of the highest fertility rates in the world. There is no better country to demonstrate the organic link between population and development than Egypt.

Given its population explosion and its strong religious background, Egypt offers a fine example of how traditions and religious values could be on a collision course with economic, social and cultural developments.

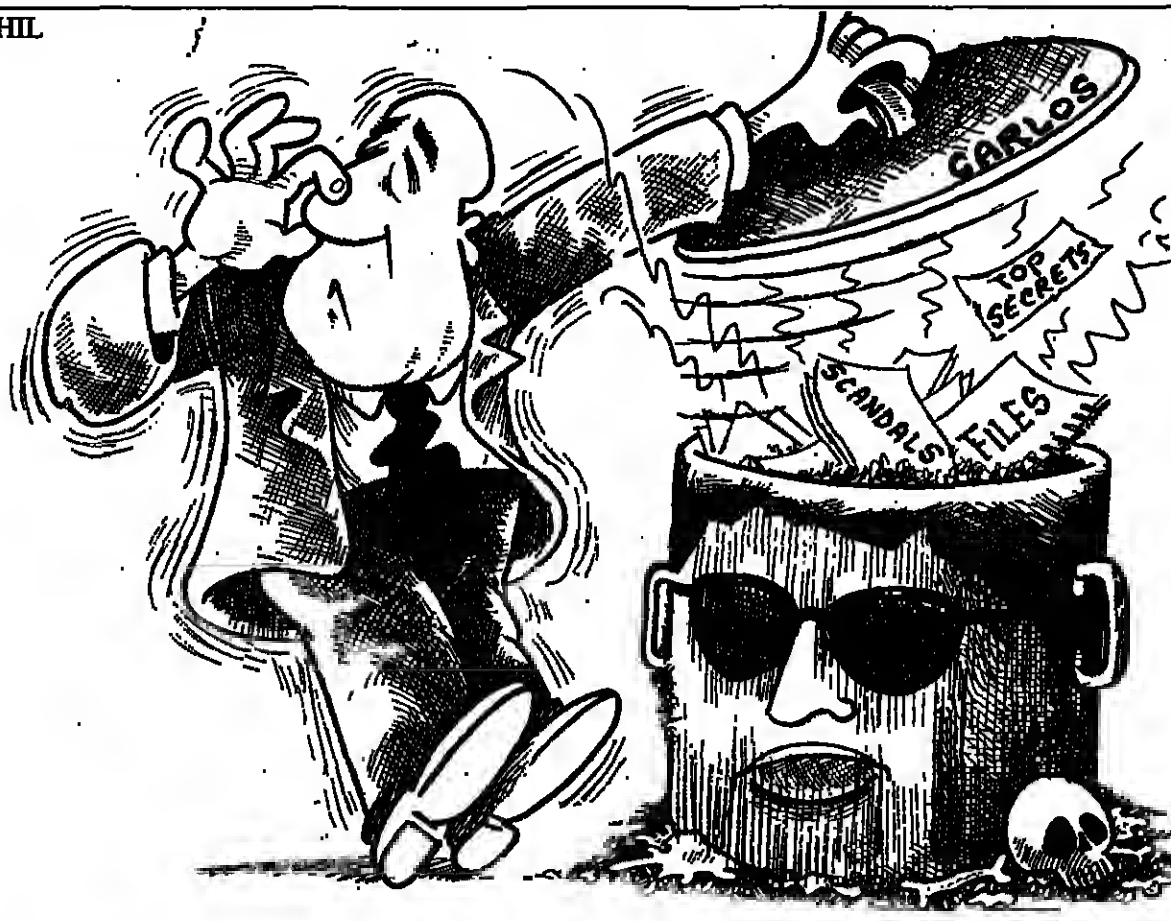
Yet the fact remains that there are many religious communities which value the right to life more than the right to development and in this context there could be a clash of perspective and even interest. Human rights activists could be divided on this vexing issue with some arguing and quite forcefully, that the collective right to life cannot be secured in isolation from economic and social development. Against this backdrop, the individual right to life may appear in conflict with the collective right to development on all levels. The opposing school of thought would argue that this basic human right to life can be enjoyed and protected without sacrificing, in any way, shape or form, the overall economic development of any given country provided that the economic planning and implementation are executed properly and faithfully.

Many industrial countries suffer from negative population growth and are encouraging immigration to their societies in a bid to escalate rather than retard economic growth. The U.S., Canada and Australia, to name just a few examples, still have an active immigration policy in order to bolster their economic well being and prosperity. On the other side of the pendulum sits countries such as China, India, Indonesia and Egypt, which clearly suffer from population increases. It would be interesting to probe into the question of whether any of these countries would have still had major economic problems had they adopted the kind of economic

strategies that served well the Western industrial world. The population problems of Egypt and Nigeria, for example, are not necessarily attributed to their population crisis. As a matter of fact, had such countries practised the kind of economic styles that served the West so well, their population problems would have been solved naturally. Still the prime issue for human rights is the right to life, which supercedes all other human rights, be they individual or collective. Immediately after conception, a fetus would acquire a body, soul and spirit, argues the Catholic Church. Without the need to delve in religious arguments, there is no doubt that a fetus is a form of life which is independent of the life of the mother or the father. This right, which human rights instruments try to protect, especially when the category of fetuses represents a vulnerable group of people who cannot defend themselves. There is always the unwanted fetuses whose rights clash with the right of the mother who might have become pregnant unwillingly, as a result of incest or rape. If life resulting from sexual violence can be terminated, there is no more credible reason not to terminate other unwanted fetuses. And if the life of a fetus becomes life threatening to the life of the mother, then a choice must be made something which entails the sacrifice of one life for another. I don't think anybody has all the perfect answers to all the dimensions associated with abortion. We kill soldiers belonging to an enemy state in order to defend the lives of our own military people and defend the country from aggression. A choice appears inevitable in all such situations. As the late U.S. President J.F. Kennedy once remarked, life is unfair by nature. Some young men are lucky enough to be posted in safe and secure areas of combat and others are arbitrarily chosen to engage the enemy in a bloody confrontation.

It would be interesting to see how the Cairo conference would deal with the abortion issue given its complexity and the inherent contradictions pertaining to it. One has to remain open-minded about the subject and amenable to sane and humane reasonings on both sides of the fence.

M. KAHIL



The need for multi-level peace making

By Maher J. Massis

IN THE past few years, our media and leaders have been very busy with the developments of the peace process. Often the press has been characterised by ups and downs as certain events and issues either raised our hopes or subdued them. These ups and downs are quite natural in the face of a complicated and multi-dimensional peace process. But what is important to keep in mind is the bold decision taken by our leaders to vigorously pursue peace with Israel despite the difficulties, risks and uncertainty. However, what we are lacking at this stage in peace making is a multi-level peace process that is essential for reinforcing a potentially successful peace agreement with Israel.

Before I elaborate on what multi-level peace making means, let me briefly review the significance of the multi-dimensionality of the current peace process.

Quite simply, a peace treaty may imply the absence of war between two parties. But a multi-dimensional peace refers to the final resolution of all outstanding issues that have collectively been the source of conflict between two countries. For instance, in the economic dimension, agreements on how to improve trade relations, expand tourism and develop the Jordan Rift Valley — could not lead to a peace treaty until other issues in other dimensions, such as the water issue, the return of Jordanian lands from Israel, demarcation of boundaries and national

security arrangements are resolved. In essence, the interconnectedness of diverse issues necessitates a multi-dimensional peace approach.

What we are currently lacking is the type of peace making that brings individual Jordanian and Israeli citizens together at different levels of society. From domestic non-government associations to the average individual citizen, interaction with corresponding elements of Israeli society would be beneficial. What this means is that we also have to make a brave decision. Can we envision a

we should reinforce such a process by adopting a multi-level peace approach that encompasses the efforts of associations, institutions and individual citizens. I am not implying here to implement the above suggestions within 24 hours, but to at least take the little steps of communications that can lead to full cooperative relations between the two societies. In other words, once all issues are resolved, including the status of Jerusalem, there is no reason why Israel should not have complete and comprehensive normal relations with Jordan.

"Our peace making efforts may fail. But what is worse than failure is not trying at all. Jordan does not exist in a vacuum frozen in time and space. The realities of change within it and around it must be well-conceived of and responded to in a manner that sustains our national dignity while ensuring the attainment of long-term interests."

close friendly relationship with the Israeli people? If we can, then we must act. We should intensify our interaction with Israelis. We should establish sisterhood universities, academic exchange programmes, scientific cooperation and cultural exchange programmes. Moreover, we should establish close cooperation between Jordanian professional organisations and their counterparts in Israel.

These few latter suggestions may be shocking to many people. But why should they? If we support our leaders' efforts in multi-dimensional peace making,

It is our responsibility to take action that we strongly believe reinforces the will of our leaders and directs our younger generations towards a new probable reality that is characterised by security, peace, economic development and the spread of freedom and democracy. Of course, there are no guarantees. Our peace making efforts may fail. But what is worse than failure is not trying at all. Jordan does not exist in a vacuum frozen in time and space. The realities of change within it and around it must be well-conceived of and responded to in a man-

ner that sustains our national dignity while ensuring the attainment of long-term interests.

Our greatest intellectual challenge is to not dwell on the past glories and use those as a basis of proving the greatness of our civilisation. Indeed, we have a tremendous cultural history to be proud of. But do we want our children in the early part of the next century to think about the greatness of the Arab people only by reading their history books or do we want them to live it? We are in need of a new Arab awakening, a renaissance that generates positive thinking in a manner that focuses on our future potential by taking the necessary steps today. One of these steps is full peace and the other is democracy. We cannot have one without the other.

Apathy is indeed a cancerous disease of any civilised society. It slowly eats away at the very fabric that binds our extended Jordanian family. It slowly destroys the building blocks of our nation, and it leads to a collective consciousness based on stubborn ignorance and the fear of positive change. By taking action we are finding a cure for this cancer and we are rejuvenating the health of the nation. Multi-dimensional peace making and multi-level peace making are two values of the same heart.

The writer is a Ph.D. candidate in political science at Houston University, the U.S. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Castro posing political threat to Clinton

By Laurence McQuillan
Reuters

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Bill Clinton, struggling to cope with Cuba's Fidel Castro, finds himself fighting a ghost from the past who is presenting a new threat to the youthful U.S. president's political future.

Already trying to overcome a tarnished international image, Mr. Clinton has been forced to hastily put together a strategy for dealing with a wave of Cuban boat refugees that has raised doubts among even the president's loyal supporters.

Mr. Clinton abruptly ended a 28-year policy of automatically admitting Cuban refugees to the United States. Then, when Cuban-American activists became upset, he tightened the economic embargo on Cuba to intensify pressure on Mr. Castro.

The ageing Cuban leader has called off the patrols that previously stopped the people from leaving. As in the Mariel Boatlift of 1980, he has simply adopted the policy of standing by and watching Washington squirm.

Mr. Clinton, whose approval rating at home has plunged to around 40 per cent in the polls, knows a mistake in handling Cuba could become a fatal flaw for him politically.

He has appeared to be approaching the crisis as a domestic problem rather than a diplomatic dilemma. Secretary of state Warren Christopher and White House National Security Adviser Anthony Lake have both been on vacation, although Mr. Christopher was summoned back to Washington Thursday. Attorney-general Janet Reno has been the main spokesperson for the Cuba policy.

White House and State Department officials have clashed over how to deal with Mr. Castro, who has been a thorn in the side of U.S. presidents since he toppled President Fulgencio Batista in 1959.

Should Washington talk to Mr. Castro? The Cuban leader, who ironically consumed much of the time of Mr. Clinton's boyhood idol, President John Kennedy, has offered talks as a way out of the latest strains between Washington and Havana.

But the United States is

balking, even at a time when it is engaged in a dialogue with old cold war enemies such as China, North Korea and Vietnam.

To talk to Cuba, senior U.S. officials say, would divert Mr. Castro's attention at a time when he should be thinking of democratic reforms to ease the plight of his people.

"We're not interested in having a higher-level political dialogue with Cuba," Undersecretary of State Peter Tarnoff said. "Our position is, we are not going to enter a dialogue with Castro over the pace and nature of change in Cuba."

The official see Mr. Castro as trying to lay his problems at the feet of the United States.

"It is Castro and the Cuban government's fault," White House Spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers said of the refugees. "Our people are leaving repressive circumstances and a crumbling economy, all brought about by Fidel Castro's refusal to move to democratic and economic reforms."

Even fellow democrats, however, have problems with the refusal to talk. Senator Christopher Dodd of Connecticut branded the approach as "mindless and foolish."

Administration officials dust off the cold war rhetoric of the past and insist that the United States cannot deal with a leader who is still wed to Communist ideology and denies fundamental civil liberties to his people.

The policy, however, apparently only applies to Mr. Castro. Mr. Clinton met in the Oval Office Thursday with Commerce Secretary Ron Brown to discuss Mr. Brown's upcoming trip to China.

Not only does Communism still flourish in China, but Mr. Clinton earlier this year had to abandon his demands for human rights improvements there — essentially because Beijing refused to listen to him.

White House officials watch the relentless flotilla of Cubans with deepening unease. They point out that when U.S. vessels began picking up Haitian boat people and taking them to Guantanamo, the Haitian exodus stopped in eight days.

But the Cuban exodus has been maintaining a steady pace despite the tough new Clinton policy.

LETTERS

Unfounded criticism

To the Editor:

JUST FOR the record, not all American citizens in Amman see eye to eye with E. Yaghi's harangue about the American embassy (Jordan Times, August 25-26).

Having lived in Amman on and off for the past two years, first as a Fulbright scholar, and later as a journalist, I have had plenty of opportunities to view the embassy staff at close range.

I feel that Ms. Yaghi's "take" on the local staff or Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) as they are professionally known — was grossly unfair. Whatever you choose to call these employees, they are certainly courteous and professional. However, I'm sorry to say that their visitors are not always the easiest people to service.

Moreover, I can only assume that Ms. Yaghi did not approach the librarians with a specific enquiry, nor did she actually speak to her for that matter. I have spent a fair amount of time in the library and can attest to the fact that the librarians do in fact have excellent English language skills (although to my knowledge she doesn't speak a word of Greek). And when it comes to locating material and sources, she and her colleagues are helpful and efficient. They don't, however, perform miracles.

While some of the Jordanian employees are not blessed with the same level of English proficiency as American citizens who may come to the embassy, on the whole the standard of English amongst FSNs is remarkably high. Certainly few, if any, have problems communicating basic information to visitors, though they might find it difficult to sustain a conversation about nuclear physics.

No one would dispute Ms. Yaghi's point about the duty of the embassy to serve its citizens regardless of colour and creed. But perhaps she should practice the vision of equality that she unnecessarily preaches. Her unfounded and disparaging remarks about the embassy's Jordanian employees lead one to believe that she has a bit of a problem with the "natives".

Furthermore, the tone of phrase employed in the column suggests that the writer thinks that the American embassy is first and foremost some kind of a gateway for Americans; an exclusive club for U.S. passport holders. Well it's not. The American embassy in Amman, like U.S. embassies around the world, provide some special services for its citizens as well as a wide variety of extensive services for the local community. It's not meant to be a place where we Americans can hang out should we get tired of our local surroundings or yearn for home.

Ms. Yaghi is entitled to her opinion, but I would like to offer her one piece of sober advice: If you're looking for red carpet treatment, a private club or a home away from home, you'd best look elsewhere.

Stephanie Genkin,
Amman.

Features

Jordan's moves help peace

(Continued from page 1)

people would come to an end soon.

He said Iraq was "an important part of the region, and its national unity and future are important to the whole region."

On reports of Iraq's involvement in the Middle East peace process, King Hussein said "Iraq has its own weight and influence in this region."

King Hussein, who left for Germany and France on Sunday, said Jordan maintains good relations with both countries and voiced hope that they would support Jordan and help ease its debt burden.

On the Washington Declaration, King Hussein said the reference in the declaration to Jordan's sovereignty over holy places in Jerusalem "is a statement of fact and a reality."

Jordan has been able to win recognition of its role in Jerusalem on behalf of the Islamic Umma, he said. This role, the King said, "is a responsible role which Jordan continues to perform."

The King said Jordan does not compete with any party, nor does it seek to impose itself on them.

The King said Jordan's position towards Jerusalem evolved from the special place Jerusalem has in the conscience and hearts of Jordanians, Arabs and Muslims.

"Jordan's historic position towards Jerusalem is well-known. So is its status since it is part of our past and present memories and our future vision of the Holy City."

The King said the Jordanian role in the upkeep of Islamic holy places "has continued despite the fall of Jerusalem under Israeli occupation in 1967."

Jordan has continued to supervise the holy places in Islamic Waqf, oversee Islamic jurisprudence and maintain its role after 1974, when the Palestinian people recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as

their sole and legitimate representative at the Rabat summit, he noted.

"The Palestinian decision did not affect our responsibility towards the Islamic holy places. On the contrary, we have been asked to continue to perform our role and duty towards these places," the King said.

The King stressed that the issue of Jerusalem would be discussed by the Palestinians and Israelis in the final negotiations on the status of Jerusalem.

The subject was raised in Washington because "we believe that there could not be any agreement on any formula without Jerusalem," King Hussein said. Jerusalem is sacred to all followers of the three monotheistic faiths, and, as such, a religious sovereignty on it should only be to God.

The King said there was no problem with the Palestinians over Jerusalem or any other issues.

"The problem, if any, might be at the leadership level," he said. "Everybody should know that we seek coordination and that we have been calling for Jordanian-Palestinian coordination and Jordanian-Arab coordination, but such coordination is lacking."

On the latest meetings between senior Palestinian and Jordanian officials in Amman, the King said the meetings stressed the need for Jordanian-Palestinian coordination and cooperation.

Asked whether a new Jordanian government was being planned, the King said: "There is nothing that pushes in that direction. Such a change usually takes place when circumstances warrant it."

The King said no time has been fixed for a visit to Jerusalem but added that he had received an invitation.

"When I go to Jerusalem, I do not need a permission from anybody. I will go there as a Hashemite, Arab, Jordanian Muslim, who has a right to go there," he said.

Demirel supports peace moves

(Continued from page 1)

ing fresh water but added that a proposed project to build a pipeline that would bring water from Turkey to Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia had not gone beyond "talk". He said no designs had been made for the project, whose cost is estimated at over \$10 billion.

On trade between Jordan and Ankara, which favours the latter, the Turkish president said his country was willing to increase the trade volume with the Kingdom.

King Hussein and Mr. Demirel earlier Sunday held a meeting in Baghdad Palace

attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan. Mr. Demirel also visited the tombs of the late King Abdullah, King Talal and Queen Zein Al Sharaf where he laid wreaths.

The Turkish president also laid wreaths on the tombs of Turkish soldiers who were killed in World War I and buried in Salt City. He was accompanied by the King's political adviser, Marwan Al Qassem.

Mr. Demirel was seen off upon departure by King Hussein and Prince Hassan and other Jordanian officials who had also received him upon arrival.

Talks advance development plans

(Continued from page 1)

two sides had yet to find solutions for complicated matters like those related to borders and water issues.

Israel wishes to create a common park at the Jordanian-Israeli borders and show pressing need.

The passes, obtained at border posts, could help Algerian residents of Europe, finishing vacations in their homeland, to drive back to Europe via Morocco and ferry across the Gibraltar Straits.

Hundreds of such people were stranded at the border Saturday. They worried about returning to work or school in Europe on time after being told that obtaining entry visas could take weeks.

The government also urged the national ferry company to give priority to bringing home stranded Algerians. The state railroad was told to help drive home Algerians stuck at the border.

Israel cabinet approves W. Bank plan

(Continued from page 1)

and they have to do that." Five Palestinian workers on the run from Rafah in the south of the Gaza Strip are suspected of involvement in the violence, Israeli police said.

Police staged a massive sweep for Palestinian workers in Israel without government-issued permits after Friday's stabbing deaths.

Police spokesman Eric Bar-Chen said 215 Palestinians were retained so far, with heavy fines imposed on employers.

Throughout the night and threw objects at policemen, injuring several lightly, he said.

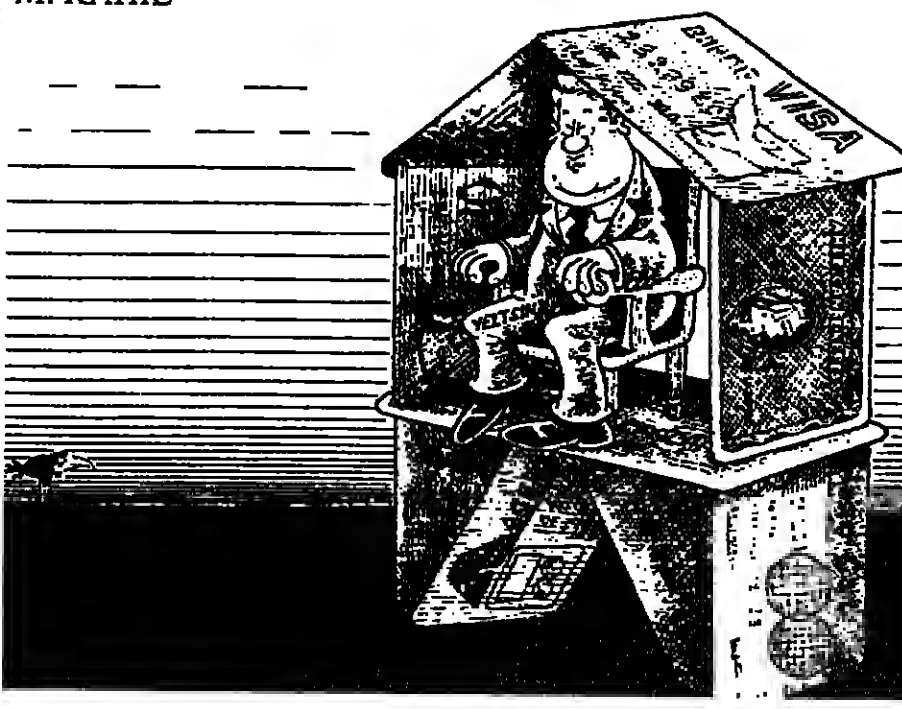
Yosef Ahtov, a resident who witnessed the riots, said they demonstrated showed "great, horrible anger, breaking everything they found in the streets. Anyone intervening could have been killed."

On Sunday morning, a 20-year-old man was lightly injured in an attempted stabbing in the Maaleh Adumim settlement in the West Bank just east of Jerusalem. The attack was apparently carried out by a Palestinian who then fled, Israeli radio said.

Is Russia becoming a banana republic?

By Yelena Khanga

M. KAHIL



Russians are seeing, rightly or not, in a multitude of ways.

Some of us think, for example, that America is walking off with our best minds. Boris Bunkin, a highly respected academician, says American interests seem to spoon off the cream. "Their grants are a pittance by American standards but huge by our own." So our best scientists are waiting in line to go.

"In Russia," says Nikolai Krotov, head of a publishing house in Moscow, "the pride factor is more important even than money." He points to the touchy area of foreign policy, the Balkans in particular.

"Serbia was a traditional ally, like a brother. Yet

now America is trying to enforce its own solution without consulting Russia. How would they feel if there was a conflict on the Mexican border and Russia stepped in without talking to America?"

Even the clergy grumble. They suffered through the lean Communist years. Now American evangelists march in and step on their corns. The Billy Grahams can afford lavish media campaigns. They rent whole stadiums and plaster ads on subways and television. The Russian clergy can't match those marketing blitzes, and they are miffed.

American foundations have become objects of suspicion. We hear that foundations are pouring in

money. We are supposed to be grateful. But ordinary people don't see much of it, which suggests to them that it finds its way to somebody's pocket — American or Russian, and probably someone close to the trough.

All of this creates a situation in which small slights become large blows. Our veterans, for example, were deeply hurt that they were left out of the D-Day celebrations.

True, we were not directly involved in the Normandy landings. But the veterans feel that the United States was playing down their enormous sacrifices and their contribution to the Allied victory, which for many is their last source of dignity. They ask: We-

ren't we Allies, too?

The older people are not happy that English is coming at them from all sides — advertisements, television shows, everything. They are deluged by third-rate terminator movies and soaps. And why, people ask, are we now bombarded with ads for cigarettes — something Americans themselves are fighting?

There are signs that such annoyances are starting to feed an atmosphere of paranoia. While I was there, for example, the FBI director, Louis Frech, was in Moscow to launch a joint attack on organised crime with the Russian police. But at least one television reporter saw a more sinister motive. Are the Yankees using the Russian underground, ho-

asked, as an excuse to worm their way into our law enforcement?

America respects only its own law, he continued. America does whatever it wants. Look at what it did in Panama. Are we becoming a banana republic?

There is even talk that America was pulling strings in the assault on the Russian White House last fall by President Boris Yeltsin's forces. People noticed that CNN seemed to have consistently good camera angles, as if it knew what was coming, and that President Bill Clinton never actually denounced the unconstitutional attack.

I don't want to overstate the case. Lots of contradictory currents are running through my country right now. For many of us, America is still the land of the dream. Personally, I think a lot of the griping is off the wall.

But reason does not flourish when life goes from bad to worse. The growing annoyance is something that Americans should not write off. As they have seen in their own country, the negative in politics can be much more powerful than the positive.

There is a big irony in this, of course. During the cold war, the bad feeling towards the United States came from the government. Now it is coming from the grass roots. America used to be our scapegoat because it was our "enemy." Now it is becoming one because it is our "friend."

The writer is a former reporter for The Moscow News and the author of "Soul to Soul: The Story of a Black Russian American Family." This comment is reprinted from The New York Times.

Sarajevo gets rid of its Serbian street names

By Dina Neretljak

Agence France Presse

SARAJEVO — The Muslim-led government in Sarajevo is changing the street names in the Bosnian capital, following the fashion of other political regimes in the region but confusing the citizens.

The names of roads, bridges and schools being changed belong to figures and events from Serbian history, and had to be removed because "they inspired the killing of the last two years," Mr. Dzanovic claimed.

"The main criterion was to bring back old names traditionally used, as well as names from Muslim history that have been previously neglected," he added.

The "old names" Mr. Dzanovic referred to pre-date the Communist period in Yugoslavia that began in 1945, and now half of the renamed streets have them.

The notorious "Sniper Alley," previously bearing the name of a Serb warrior, Vojvoda Putnik, is now the Street of the Dragon of Bosnia, which was a nickname of a Muslim feudal leader.

Faruk, a 65-year-old native Sarajevo, said he was glad about some of the retrieved names, but wondered why "some perfectly agreeable names were changed for those of completely anonymous people."

No debate was organised among citizens "because of the war conditions, but we had incessant calls from people who urged us to change the names," Mr. Dzanovic claimed.

But most people woke up to find they had been given a new address overnight.

Vildana, a 29-year-old Muslim, said she had been unworried by the fact that her street had been named after a Serb ruler, Nemanja.

"We were neither asked our opinion, nor informed that the change actually took place," she said.

The current Bosnian administration has been slower to rename streets than its counterparts in Croatia and Serbia, or the various self-proclaimed

mini-states formed since the beginning of the war in the former Yugoslavia.

The Muslim-led government, supported by moderate Croats and Serbs, that was elected in 1990, did not undertake the job immediately, primarily because it could not agree on what criterion to apply.

But with the Muslims now dominant, the city government is making up for lost time.

However, Sarajevoans think the newly prescribed names will cause much confusion.

Just imagine trying to figure out somebody's address, or the feeling of refugees once they return to the city," Faruk said.

The city government seems unworried. "People will get used to it once everything is introduced at full scale," Mr. Dzanovic said.

Faruk was sceptical: "When I finally memorise the new names, after half a lifetime, a new government will change them and I'll have to start again," he said.

Peru electoral climate heating up but candidates missing

By Mary Powers

Reuter

LIMA — Peru's electoral climate has begun to heat up as potential contenders stump in the Andean highlands and shantytowns of the capital — the only thing that's missing are the official candidates.

Javier Perez de Cuellar, former United Nations secretary-general, virtually threw his hat into the ring for next April's elections during a meeting last week in the sprawling shantytown of Villa el Salvador south of the capital.

"I am an independent candidate. I am independent, not only of parties but also of ideologies," he said after a week-long tour of Andean highland towns that began with his entry into Peru's poorest region of Puno from neighbouring Bolivia.

Hours after the Villa el Salvador rally, however, the 74-year-old diplomat issued a statement saying he was seriously considering a run for president but that he would not make a definitive decision until Sept. 23.

For his part, President

Alberto Fujimori has continued an intense schedule of inaugurating schools and public works programmes, especially in poor Lima shantytowns where he often hands out calendars with his picture on it.

Although the president has repeatedly hinted he will seek reelection, Mr. Fujimori has said he was not likely to make a final decision on his candidacy until a few days before the Oct. 9 filing deadline.

"Both would-be candidates are suffering from the Vargas Llosa syndrome," said Manuel Torrado, head of the Datum International Group Sa Polling Firm.

He was referring to novelist Mario Vargas Llosa's drawn-out presidential campaign for the 1990 vote, which ended in a stinging defeat to President Alberto Fujimori.

Mr. Torrado said Perez de Cuellar was waiting until the last minute to declare his candidacy to avoid losing political steam and sidestepping any comparisons with Vargas Llosa, who never managed to lose an image as a white man in a predominantly indigenous

and mestizo nation.

For this reason, Perez de Cuellar's unexpected entry into Peru's political arena by way of the Andean highlands was seen by most analysts in a positive light and even won the unlikely praise of Peru's first lady Susana Higuchi.

"His (Perez de Cuellar's) entry into the country has been beautiful and majestic," she said in an interview on Sunday night. "It was a fabulous idea to come from the lake, repeating the same history of Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo."

According to Incan mythology, the founders of Peru's most powerful pre-Colombian culture Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo emerged from Lake Titicaca near the Bolivian border until reaching the fertile sacred valley of Urubamba and later Cuzco, which became the capital of the Incan empire.

Analysts, however, said that Perez de Cuellar's formal air earned in the halls of international diplomacy contrasts sharply with Mr. Fujimori's home-spun manner of communicating with the Peruvian public.

Last week, in a typical appearance in the shantytown of Santa Colonia in the port of Callao, Mr. Fujimori rejected barbs from Perez de Cuellar about his possible use of public funds for political mileage in the runoff to the campaign.

"The more they beat me, the harder I work," he told a cheering crowd, paraphrasing a popular saying about how wives in Peru's Andean highlands love for their husbands grows the more they are beaten by them.

But the usually-confident Mr. Fujimori has been visibly affected by public statements by Mr. Higuchi, from whom he has been living apart since her public protest this month over an electoral law that bans her from seeking office and criticisms of his rule.

Mr. Higuchi's "generalised and vague accusations" of corruption in Fujimori's government generate uncertainty and damage the country image abroad, the president said.

Polls show that Mr. Fujimori, son of Japanese immigrants, holds an advantage of about 20 percentage

Secret truths from Stalin's 'Outlaw'

By Tania Teschke

Agence France Presse



Josef Stalin

Gorchakov remarked. "I was a witness to Stalin's last words, which were from a declaration he read aloud. Something like, 'we must be more energetic and fight for our great endeavour. We must conquer America,' and so on."

"What else would he say... I was very glad when Stalin died, but of course I could not say so openly."

Mr. Gorchakov, who spends his days writing memoirs, working on film and magazine projects and polishing a biography of his father, served as a spy in Poland and Germany during World War II, usually posing as an American or German.

"People never saw the Russian in me," he asserted proudly.

He also served as a government official in Seoul during the Korean war and, from 1975 to 1977, he travelled around the globe as a Soviet Olympic Committee delegate.

Mr. Gorchakov works at home, where he is comfortably surrounded by trophies of a career fraught with danger and intrigue, including swords from Japanese and Nazi soldiers, Olympic banners and photos of Cuban leader Fidel Castro and first Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin.

He is currently negotiating publication of the second and third volumes of "Outlaw" in Russia and the United States where he hopes to find a market for the detailed and vivid descriptions of his wartime assignments as a Soviet spy.

For his past, Mr. Gorchakov has received numerous awards and decorations, including the Soviet Medal of the Red Star and the Gold Medal for Freedom of the Polish People, the highest honour bestowed by Poland on a foreigner.

As for his future, Mr. Gorchakov has one aspiration: to tell the truth.

MOSCOW — Ovid Gorchakov, surrounded by the relics of his cold war career that adorn his modest Moscow apartment, imparted this first-hand observation: Josef Stalin was partially bald.

As the late Soviet dictator's personal English-language translator and a top wartime spy, Mr. Gorchakov, 70, was privy for decades to secrets of the Kremlin elite.

And after a life in the shadows, he has now begun to share some of them in a three-volume autobiography entitled "outlaw," part of which has already been published.

"The first time I saw Stalin I was shocked," Mr. Gorchakov, a gold-medal Soviet laureate author, said in a recent interview.

"We had always seen him as a towering man. But he was a shrimp! And he was no genius. Russia nearly lost the war because of Stalin. He was often crazy and believed everyone wanted to do away with him."

Despite misgivings, Mr. Gorchakov, described in the Soviet Encyclopedia of World War II as one of the 10 "most honoured" Soviet intelligence agents, worked with Stalin and later Nikita Khrushchev during a 15-year post in the Kremlin.

He was also the only one of the top 10 wartime spies to avoid execution, a fact Gorchakov attributed to his youthfulness and impeccable English learned during six years living in England and the United States as a child.

"Stalin was always very suspicious of the Americans. He had a rule: to annihilate all those who had been in the West," Mr. Gorchakov said, adding that he was spared for his translation abilities.

Gorchakov's father, Alexander, a diplomat posted by Stalin to Washington in the early 1930s to canvas U.S. support for the fledgling Soviet Union, was not so lucky.

He was branded by Stalin as a traitor and, along with Mr. Gorchakov's sister, Dolly, was consigned for nearly a decade to Inta, a Soviet labour camp in Siberia, and allowed to return to Moscow only after Stalin's death.

"That's what makes me so bitter against Stalin... Stalin was an S.O.B.," Mr.

Jordanians likely to collect peace dividends faster than Palestinians

This is the first of a two part article that attempts to identify some of the impacts and consequences that would result from the assumption that final peace for the region has been achieved.

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — "Assuming that full and true peace is achieved, the benefits of peace in the region will come to Jordan at a pace faster than that envisaged for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip," Abdalla Al Malki told a gathering of personalities at the Orthodox Club Saturday evening.

Dr. Malki explained in his address, entitled "The economy and the peace," that the economic and social infrastructure in Jordan was ready whereas the ground is not prepared in the occupied territories.

"The East Bank resembles a land ready for planting whereas the occupied territories are like a land that still requires reclamation before it becomes suitable for planting," said Dr. Malki, a noted economist.

Dr. Malki, who heads the Association of Banks in Jordan and is editor-in-chief of the Banks in Jordan magazine, said that economic conditions in the self-rule areas were not affected by the political developments.

"On the contrary," he said, "certain things, economically, fell back in the self-rule areas, such as closing or

restricting the Israeli labour market to Gazans and the isolation of Jericho touristically."

"Economically speaking, the occupation has not yet ended in the self-rule areas," Dr. Malki stressed.

Another factor which would determine the emergence of the Palestinian economy was, according to the lecturer, the extent of security and safety in the Palestinian lands.

"The Palestinian-Palestinian peace is necessary for economic emergence in the occupied territories just as there is need for peace between Palestinians, Israelis and Arabs," the lecturer pointed out. "Palestinian-Palestinian peace is not a foregone issue because investors and observers take it into consideration regardless of whatever politicians say about it," he added.

However, Dr. Malki cautioned that the peace benefits reaching Jordan at a much faster pace and bigger volume than the West Bank should not be a cause for rejoicing because of the linkage between the economies of Jordan and the occupied territories.

The lecturer gave the following three examples of such economic linkages:



Abdalla Malki

1) The more delay of an economic revival in Palestinian lands, the less demand for Jordanian products (exports).

2) The faster the economic conditions improve in the occupied lands, the less the financial assistance that people living in Jordan send to their relatives (in the West Bank and Gaza) will be. Such a decrease in transfers would ease the burden on the Jordanian economy.

3) A developing Palestinian economy might not only stop Palestinian labourers from seeking work in the Kingdom and help ease unemployment here but might also attract Jordanian labour to work in Palestinian territories.

Dr. Malki also spoke of

production elements, noting that peace would certainly ease the movement of these elements increasingly over the years. He specifically analysed the elements of labour, goods and capital in the production process.

Labour market

According to Dr. Malki, there are three markets on the labour front: the Israeli market, where the minimum wage is JD 700 a month, the Palestinian market where the wage is on average half that in Israel and the Jordanian market, where the average monthly pay is JD 150 or, approximately, half the amount in the Palestinian market.

Logically, labour movement in open markets goes from the country with a low pay to the country with a higher pay. As such, initially, labour will move from the Jordanian market to the Palestinian market and from both of these markets to the Israeli labour market.

It is a fact of the practical life that Palestinians go to the Israeli labour market, Dr. Malki said, but the hard fact is that the Palestinians will continue to do so until the Palestinian economy emerges and creates hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Noting that such a potential would only be achieved in the long-term, Dr. Malki

(Continued on page 9)

Disparity in U.S. workforce widens

JACKSON HOLE, Wyoming (R) — Even as the U.S. economic expansion continues to create jobs, the disparity between those at the top and those that work at the lowest wage levels continues to widen, officials say.

The growing gap between the young and the old, the skilled and those without much formal training, minorities and others, is troublesome to policymakers, who worry that America may be creating what amounts to two societies.

"If something isn't done, it will only get worse," Labour Department chief economist Lawrence Katz said at an international meeting here sponsored by the Kansas City Federal Reserve (Fed).

The Clinton administration, while enjoying relatively low unemployment levels as the U.S. expansion has continued to create jobs, has attempted to address a problem that has been growing for many years — that of long-term unemployment.

The administration has proposed legislation designed to deal with the fact that large numbers are finding themselves sidelined for long periods by forces that many can do little about.

"While cyclical and seasonal unemployment still exists, the problem of structural unemployment has grown in importance as technological progress, corporate restructuring, the integration of the world economy, and defence downsizing have accelerated the pace of fundamental change," Labour Secretary Robert Reich said recently.

It was a theme that repeatedly surfaced at the international seminar as policymakers puzzled over far-reaching changes in the global economy, many of them unanticipated and with few certain answers.

Central bankers, from Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan to Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer, generally agreed that about the worst thing they could do would be to turn their back on inflation even if it brought short-term employment gains.

Mr. Greenspan said that while persistent high unemployment was costly, a herculean effort to stimulate the economy by rate cuts and government spending would amount to economic suicide.

"Any tendency to seek a bit of micro policy relief by pushing on the outer limits of

monetary policy risks longer-term financial instability," Mr. Greenspan told the gathering.

To an extent, the growing levels of poverty and long-term joblessness reflect the fact that the pace of technological change has escalated with the cutting edge becoming commonplace with meteoric swiftness.

Those who can't keep up or are not well prepared, falter, are left behind, and drop out.

As Mr. Tietmeyer discussing Germany put it: "It is reflected among other things in the fact that high unemployment and substantially unsatisfied demand for labour coexist simultaneously," he told the group.

In the United States, the problem is far worse for the have-nots although unemployment stood at a relatively reasonable 6.1 per cent in July. By contrast it is running at 8-14 per cent in Germany and around 11 per cent for Europe at large.

Mr. Reich, for his part, says about half of the U.S. workforce is not well-prepared for the economy that it is supposed to be serving.

But for former secretary of

state George Shultz, this was only part of the problem.

In remarks to the high-powered group of global officials and economists, Mr. Shultz noted that at the very least, the people they had been talking about were in a system that they recognized.

"It seems to me that our discussion has been largely about people, who while unemployed, are in a sense within a system and we understand the parameters of that system and we can argue about and work at it," he told the group.

But he said another economic system — that he felt was growing — revolved around drugs and crime and no family attachments and gangs, and this would prove threatening to the major system if they were not addressed.

"They're unemployed in one sense but they're busy as hell in another sense," said Mr. Shultz.

For others at the meeting, the gathering also seemed to lack a human face. "Unemployment has a devastating impact on people," AFL-CIO research director Rudy Oswald observed. "It is being told by the system that 'we don't need you'."

Iran expected to need \$60b income

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's Finance Minister Morteza Mohammad Khan said Iran needed about \$60 billion in its second five-year economic plan, an Iranian newspaper reported Saturday.

"Hard currency needs of the country were \$107 billion in the first five-year plan but we would not be needing more than \$60 billion in the second," the Salam newspaper quoted him as saying.

Iran's parliament is expected to discuss the second five-year economic plan within the next two months. The first five-year plan ran out on March 20.

Parliament, worried about the effect of "inflation" and other economic hardships, has delayed approval of the second plan drafted by the government in December.

That draft envisaged annual economic growth of between 5.4 per cent based on total oil export revenue of \$77.5 billion.

Mr. Mohammad Khan said average annual income for the country was \$15 billion and that each percentage variation in oil prices would affect Iran's currently income by five per cent, the paper reported.

He also said Iran increased its investment in development projects during the first five-year plan.

Wheat and rice output have reached 11 million tonnes and one million tonnes respectively. Steel exports rose to 1.3 million tonnes and petrochemical capacity was put at 10 million tonnes.

Unemployment figures fell to 10.20 per cent in 1993 from 15.1 per cent since the beginning of Iran's first five-year plan in 1989, Mr. Mohammad Khan said.

Minister of Industry Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh was quoted by the Jahan Eslam newspaper as saying that industrial investments were about \$17 billion in the first five-year plan.

The Iranian news agency IRNA said Iran expects the value of its production of metals and other non-oil minerals to almost double in its second five-year economic plan.

IRNA was reviewing official figures on the growth of the metals and mining sector during Iran's first five-year economic development plan, which ended in March of this year.

"The report...indicated

that the total value of the production of the mines and metals ministry was \$11 billion, while the figure is expected to rise up to \$20 billion at the end of the second five-year plan," the agency said.

IRNA did not say what volume of metals and other minerals Iran expected to produce over the five years of the new plan, nor what price projections it was using to

calculate the increase in their value.

Iran earned a total of \$1.4 billion during the first five-year plan from the exports of metals and other minerals, chiefly iron ore, IRNA said.

Iron ore production grew at an average of 27.7 per cent a year during the first five-year plan, passing the plan's target of 24.2 per cent a year laid down in the plan, IRNA said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY AUGUST 29, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Be more cooperative with associates for mutual gain as you avoid time wasters who don't contribute to the over all. Study a new outlet that could open doors for you in the future.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Find a new way of solving a difficult problem. Be more agreeable with a new acquaintance who could be helpful to you in your business.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Try not to be too forceful with others in order to gain your personal aims. Be more concerned with doing your tasks well and efficiently.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You have excellent ideas which should be put in operation quickly for best results. Sidelstep a fair-weather friend and you will have a good day.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Find best way to handle tasks which you have committed yourself to and gain the respect of others you have acquaintances with.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Find out what is expected of you by associates and cooperate more with them. You have creative ideas which need expression.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't get downhearted because you think you have too

big a workload. This is a time to put more effort into the tasks you have to do.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Show more courtesy to others and gain their goodwill by being more cooperative. Avoid one who is a time waster and is not productive.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Do whatever will bring more harmony between you and close ties. Get rid of whatever is causing disharmony within your household.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be clear of a situation which could bring trouble. You must exercise more patience in handling a civic matter in a proper fashion.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Be more objective in business dealings and get better results. Look for ways to improve your financial status for the better.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You may be anxious to gain a personal aim but don't be forced with others in trying to do so. Be sensible in whatever is to be done.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Your ambitions are fine but gain them tactfully and not forcefully. Avoid one who is not thinking straight and with much knowledge.

Birthstone of August:
Peridot — Golden Quartz

THE Daily Crossword by Samuel K. Flagner

ACROSS	DOWN
1 Raceway	1 "Slices of the —"
5 Minor-league club	2 In the works
9 Source of plaster?	3 Delegated
14 Heirloom	4 Gomorrah's twin city
15 Balm ingredient	5 Grain-shaped noodles
16 Chopin opus	6 Others: Let
17 Frame of mind	7 Freshwater fish
18 Iranian money	8 Free-for-all
19 Dymal	9 Friendly correspondent
20 Drawing power	10 Sleep like —
21 Frustrating	11 Country
22 Wife of Zeus	12 Bumpkin
23 555	13 Vend
24 Microbes	14 First name in Cuba
25 22	15 Stravinsky
26 Dwelling place	16 Simpleton
27 Son of Isaac	17 Peepers
28 Spanish painter	18 Respiratory sound
29 Mamma, a.g.	19 From a distance
30 Capital of Yemen	20 Adam
31 A Turner	21 August
32 Ascended	22 Offense native
33 Fall to follow suit	23 Family member
34 Drop	24 Too bad!
35 Burden	
36 Famous bridge in Venice	
37 Michael Douglas/Glenn Close film	
38 Price	
39 Dame Myra	
40 Cosmic	
41 Literary kisser	
42 Double curve	
43 Entertainer John	
44 Rattler	
45 Cestus	

Puzzle Solved:

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43 Entertainer John	
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45 Cestus	

Colombo seeks revision of huge foreign deals

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka's new administration Sunday announced it was seeking the revision of multi-million dollar contracts awarded to foreign firms by the last government, which has been accused of looting the treasury.

Information Minister Dissanayake said the government had already suspended deals worth nearly a billion dollars to assess the damage done to the economy, and warned that it may not be able to honour the contracts in full.

Ms. Kumaratunga — who is also finance minister — has said that about \$440 million were missing from the treasury, and believes that the previous government went on a spending spree before the election, no one can say we did not tell them," he said.

"We need time to examine the legal positions and seek a revision of the terms. We want to explain to our people what has happened. Because of the legal implications we may reluctantly pay only the minimum," Mr. Senanayake told AFP.

Prime Minister Chandrika Kumaratunga put off the signing of an agreement due

on Monday with the French-led European Airbus Industrie, and sought more time to probe the \$750 million transaction, a spokesman for the premier said.

Sri Lanka was to buy seven brand new Airbus aircraft, but later scaled down the order to five planes out of which two A-320 models have already been delivered. The remaining three A-340s were due to be delivered next month and in February.

Ms. Kumaratunga — who is also finance minister — has said that about \$440 million were missing from the treasury, and believes that the previous government went on a spending spree before the election, no one can say we did not tell them," he said.

The government also put on hold a \$37.5 million telecommunications contract awarded to a consortium involving the American firm AT and T and Japan's Marubeni Corporation, telecom officials said.

It said the contract was to set up a new cable network and exchanges in the capital Colombo, but there had been allegations that lower bids for the project had been ignored.

A hurried move to buy second hand arms and military equipment from Russia's Veontech state enterprise just before the Aug. 16 parliamentary polls was also probed.

Mr. Senanayake said parliament had not sanctioned payment for helicopters, transport planes, armoured personnel carriers and patrol craft from Russia.

The first consignment of second-hand BMP One and Two model armoured personnel carriers arrived here two days before the election.

The new government is also moving to auction a fleet of luxury BMW seven series and Volvo 940 cars imported for former ministers just three months before their government was voted out.

Political analysts said Ms. Kumaratunga's People's Alliance government had to show it was committed to probing the financial transactions of the United National Party (UNP) regime.

External Trade and Justice Minister G. L. Peiris told reporters last week that up to 40 per cent of money allocated for foreign-aided de-

velopment projects ended up in private pockets during the UNP's 17-year reign.

Mr. Peiris said the government was seeking the cooperation of Swiss banks to investigate black money held by corrupt politicians from the previous administration.

"Switzerland has the most stringent banking secrecy laws but even then they cooperated with the Aquino regime to get back to the Philippines the ill-gotten wealth which was spirited out of the country," Mr. Peiris said adding that he expected Swiss banks to extend the same cooperation to Sri Lankan authorities.

He was referring to the investigations against the late president of Philippines Ferdinand Marcos, whose assets were seized by the government of President Corason Aquino after protracted legal action.

Ms. Kumaratunga's government is planning to set up an independent commission to probe bribery and corruption with retrospective effect and action will be taken to acquire wealth stolen from the state.

Peanuts



Andy Capp

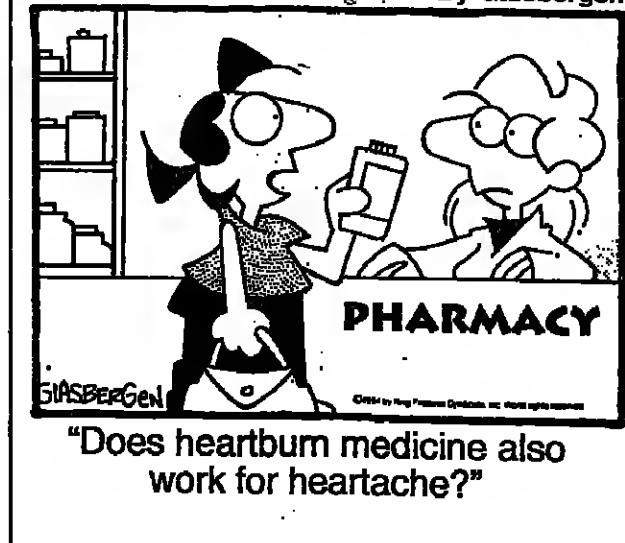


Blondie



THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



Jumble not received

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

Jamaican hurdler tests positive; Vlad, Botev win weightlifting golds

VICTORIA, British Columbia (AP) — Jamaican hurdler Foster, this season's NCAA indoor and outdoor titlist, Saturday became the second Commonwealth Games competitor in two days to be disqualified over drugs.

The day after Ghanaian bantamweight boxer Godson Sawah was stripped of his bronze medal for using a weight-losing diuretic furosemide, Foster, who finished sixth in the 110 hurdles final, was sent home for using the banned stimulant ephedrine.

A Commonwealth Games Federation statement said Foster's sixth place would be nullified. Details of the positive test would be passed on to track's world governing body, the IAAF, who could further punish the hurdler.

Foster has lived in the United States since he was 13 and studies at Fresno University, Calif.

While it was shame for Foster, it was glory for another Jamaican hurdler, Michelle Freeman, who clocked 13.12 to win the women's 100 Saturday.

In the weightlifting arena, Romanian-born former world and Olympic champion Nicu Vlad collected three gold medals on his first appearance at the Commonwealth Games but failed in his bid to set a world record.

Now competing at heavyweight for Australia, 30-year-old Vlad broke the Commonwealth mark with his second lift with a snatch of 186 kilos to clinch the gold medal.

He then tried to become the first 108k competitor to lift 198 kilos but had to drop the bar before getting it

above his head.

Vlad, Olympic titlist in 1984 and world champion in 1986 and '90, then returned to easily win the clean and jerk with a lift of 220 kilos. The nearest to him was Nigeria's innocent Chika who lifted 200.

Vlad also won the overall gold with Chika finishing second in all three and Gareth Hives of Wales, who once served a suspension for drug use, collecting bronze in all three.

Only four lifters took part in the 108k category. South Africa's Marc Marais was the one to finish out of the medals.

Two-time world titlist Stefan Botev, a Bulgarian who now competes for Australia, won gold medals in the super-heavyweight (plus 108k) clean and jerk and overall after finishing second to Australia's Steven Kettner in the snatch.

Botev was expected to go for a world record lift but was hampered by a thigh muscle injury.

Canada's Carole Rouillard overtook countrywomen Lizanne Bussieres at 40k to win the Commonwealth Games women's marathon. Rouillard won the race in 2 hours 30 minutes and 41 seconds and Bussieres made it a 1-2 for the host nation by taking second, 26 seconds behind. England's Yvonne Danson won the bronze in 2:32.24.

Other track finals, Australian athletes won both the women's long jump and high jump.

Nicole Boegman leaped 6.82 metres to win the long jump ahead of England's Olyinka Idowu and Alison Inverarity's games record

1.94 metres gained her the high jump title ahead of South Africa's Charmaine Weavers.

Lameck Agutu won the men's 10,000 metres by 9.50 seconds from Zimbabwe's Tendai Chimasusa with Fackson Nkandn of Zambia third. Agutu ran away from the field from the 6k mark to win in 28 minutes 38.22 seconds.

Neil Winter became the first Welshman to win a pole vault medal in a major international meet when he climbed a modest 5.40 metres.

Favoured South African Okkert Brits, who has beaten world record holder Sergei Bubka this season, entered the competition at 5.50 and missed all three attempts at that height.

"I feel very bad," Brits said. "There was not a lot of pressure, but I really wanted to win the gold for South Africa. The Commonwealth Games was the most important meet of the year for me. I feel so negative now that I just want to sweat something."

Malaysia, which hosts the games in Kuala Lumpur in 1998, won its first gold medals on the penultimate day in the badminton events.

Rashid Sidek, the favoured player, overcame countryman Ewe Hock Ong, 15-6, 15-4. Then soon Kit Cheah and Beng Kiang Soo downed England's Simon Archer and Christopher Hunt 15-10, 15-9 in the men's doubles final.

Australia's Lisa Campbell whipped Canada's Si-An Deng 11-2, 11-5 to win the women's singles. Kasumi Takahashi, who was born in Tokyo, lives in Los Angeles but competes

for Australia, added four golds to the overall title she won Friday in rhythmic gymnastics. She triumphed Saturday in the hoop, the ball, the clubs and the ribbon competitions.

Twelve boxing finals also were staged Saturday with Canada winning four and Northern Ireland and Kenya each winning two.

The host nation's winners were Casey Patton (featherweight, 57k), Mike Strange (lightweight, 60k), Rowan Donaldson (middleweight, 75k), Dale Brown (light-heavyweight, 81k).

Kenya's Hassan Ramadani won the light-flyweight (48k) title and countryman Ousar Ahmed triumphed at heavyweight (91k).

Northern Ireland's Jim Webb outpointed Bob Gasio of Western Samoa in the light middleweight (71 kilo) final.

The Seychelles collected its first ever Commonwealth Games medal when rival Cadeau received one of the bronzes but team officials weren't happy about the fact he did not fight for a place in the final.

Cadeau, one of the favourites for gold, did not show for his semifinal against Webb because he thought it was scheduled for later in the day. His team's protest that they weren't told of the scheduling change was thrown out.

"It's a sad story," said Antonio Gopal, president of the Seychelles National Olympic Committee, said. "I'm very unhappy with the situation."

Northern Ireland's Neil Sinclair won the welterweight final, outpointing Albert Eromosele of Nigeria.

Ronaldo scores on Dutch League debut

AMSTERDAM (R) — Brazilian striker Ronaldo, the world's most expensive teenager soccer player and hailed as the new Pele, scored on his Dutch League debut to help PSV Eindhoven to a 4-2 win at Vitesse Arnhem Sunday.

Ronaldo, a member of Brazil's World Cup-winning squad signed by PSV for \$6 million, scored the opening goal in the 10th minute of an excellent debut. But the 17-year-old was upstaged by another new recruit, Belgian international Luc Nilis who scored twice.

Dutch champions Ajax Amsterdam opened the campaign with a comfortable 3-1 victory over RKC Waalwijk, but last season's runners-up Feyenoord Rotterdam had a miserable start with two internationals sent off in a 1-1 draw at Dordrecht '90.

Feyenoord led through a 21st-minute goal by Dean Gorre but could not hold out after defenders John de Wolf and Ulrich van Gobel were dismissed in the second half for serious fouls.

Dordrecht equalised through Virgil Breteveld in the 75th minute.

Ajax had no problems in overcoming Waalwijk, taking a 3-0 lead with goals from Patrick Kluijver in the 14th minute, captain Danny Blind seven minutes before half-time and 18-year-old debutant Nordin Wooter in the 66th.

Harry Decheiver managed a consolation goal for Waalwijk in the 76th minute. Volendam lead the table after the opening weekend courtesy of a 3-0 victory over Go Ahead Eagles.

Mandela drops out as IOC congress speaker

PARIS (R) — South African President Nelson Mandela has dropped out of this week's centenary Olympic congress because of political commitments at home, an International Olympic Committee (IOC) official said Sunday.

Mandela's decision means organisers of the \$15-million Paris congress, the Olympic movement's first such meeting for 13 years, have lost their three biggest names.

A spokesman for French President Francois Mitterrand said last week that Mitterrand would not be opening the congress, in which world sports chiefs are due to debate the future of the games, despite IOC statements that he would do so.

Instead, Prime Minister Edouard Balladur will address Monday's formal opening ceremony.

Spanish tenor Placido Domingo, who was due to sing at the grandiose ceremony, also withdrew — because his mother was sick, according to Olympic sources.

IOC Director-General Francois Carrard said Mandela, whom he described as an "old friend" of the Olympic movement, had long warned the IOC that his parliamentary schedule might prevent him coming to Paris.

"We left the matter open, but the latest news is that he will not be with us," Carrard told a news conference.

Instead the IOC's four keynote speakers on the four full days of congress from Tuesday to Friday will be French Environment Minister Michel Barnier, Former U.S. hurdler Ed Moses, French Sports Minister Michele Alliot-Marie and veteran marine explorer and

ecologist Jacques Cousteau. The congress begins with a day of celebrations across Paris, including an Oxford versus Cambridge University boat race on the Seine and a torch and flag relay, before the actual opening ceremony in the Bercy Stadium in eastern Paris.

It was in Paris in 1894 that Baron Pierre de Coubertin saw his dream come true of reviving the Olympiads of ancient Greece.

Joining Balladur at the podium will be IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch and Paris mayor Jacques Chirac — one of Balladur's possible rivals for next year's presidential elections.

Carrard said the budget for the five-day congress and subsequent meetings of the IOC itself was 81 million French francs (\$15.1 million) — and that was likely to be exceeded.

The IOC itself is contributing 31 million francs and its sponsors 10 million francs. The French government and the city of Paris are paying 20 million each to host the meeting.

In the run-up to the congress, the IOC's 10-member executive board has had weekend meetings with the

nine cities bidding to host the 2002 Winter Games.

Salt Lake City, capital of the American state of Utah, is generally seen as the front-runner ahead of Quebec City, Canada, the Swiss town of Sion, Graz, Austria, and Ostersund in Sweden.

Also bidding are the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi, Tarvisio in Italy, the Spanish town of Jaca, and Poprad of Slovakia.

But Salt Lake City officials, with three defeats behind them, have been keen to play down any notion they are the favourites, recalling only too well their narrow loss to Nagano, Japan, for the right to host 1998 Winter Games.

An IOC evaluation commission will narrow the field down to four candidates in January and the 90 IOC members will make the final choice in Budapest next June.

The executive board also heard reports from the organisers of both the Atlanta Games in 1996 and those in Nagano. Carrard said both cities showed themselves to be making "substantial and satisfactory" progress in their preparations.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
8 TARIQ HUSSEIN
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQ8742 ♣J ♠A7 ♠KQ84
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?

What do you bid now?
A.—With a minimum opening bid, you would rebid two spades to show your six-card suit. This hand is considerably better than that and you should describe it by first rebidding two clubs, intending to bid spades a second time at your next turn.

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠83 ♣Q10842 ♠J45 ♠K6
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?

What action do you take?
A.—Your hand may not be worth much to partner at a spade contract should you take a preference to that suit. However, if partner has even two hearts, you might do quite well at a heart contract. Bid two hearts.

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K105 ♣Q42 ♠A10542 ♠94
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass ?

What do you bid now?
A.—You can't afford to bid two diamonds—since you are a passed hand that is not forcing and partner

might pass, leaving the spade fit undiscussed. Although a raise to two spades does not do this hand full justice, we feel it is the most descriptive bid.

Q.4—North-South vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AK ♣108742 ♠QJ74 ♠A4
Your right-hand opponent opens one club. What action do you take?
A.—What an ugly hand! Your prime values are in your short suits, but if you don't act now you might be faced with even more difficult problems later. Overall one heart.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠1032 ♣Q832 ♠J92 ♠K7
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?
A.—You don't have the values for game, even if partner is maximum, and with your balanced hand there's no need to check on the possibility of a 4-4 major-suit fit. Pass.

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠A ♣Q64 ♠AQJ853 ♠A85
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one heart. What do you bid now?
A.—It's simply a matter of whether or not you are good enough to double first and then bid diamonds, or whether you should content yourself with a simple overcall. We don't think you can make game, unless partner has enough to set voluntarily, so we would opt for the conservative two diamonds.

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For once, Graf not overwhelming favourite at U.S. Open

NEW YORK (AP) — Forget the domination of Chris Evert, Martina Navratilova, Monica Seles and Steffi Graf in women's tennis.

"Anyone can win the U.S. Open," says Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

In the 26 years since the beginning of the open era, six women have won 21 titles, led by Evert's six and Navratilova's four. Graf, Billie Jean King and Margaret Smith Court each won three times. Seles and Tracy Austin captured two crowns, while Virginia Wade, Hana Mandlikova and Gabriela Sabatini each wrote their name into the record books once.

Of the 10 previous open era winners, only two — Graf and Sabatini — are in this year's 128-player field. Graf, the No. 1-ranked woman in the world, is top-seeded and

one of the favourites, while a second Sabatini title would be even more surprising than her first in 1990.

Still, Graf is not the overwhelming choice she has been in the past. This year, she's only won one Grand Slam tournament title, the Australian Open. Sanchez Vicario won her second French Open title and her fellow Spaniard, Conchita Martinez, took Wimbledon by beating Navratilova in the final.

The last time the first three Grand Slam tournaments were won by three different players was in 1990, when Graf won the Australian, Seles the French and Navratilova Wimbledon. That was the year Sabatini captured the two-week tournament at the National Tennis Centre in Flushing Meadow.

In three of the last four times the first three Grand Slam tournaments were won by different players, the fourth went to yet another.

In 1979, Kathy Jordan, Evert, Navratilova and Anstsin won the year's top four tournaments. In 1981, Navratilova, Mandlikova, Evert and Anstsin shared the wealth.

In 1987, Mandlikova won the Australian and Graf the French Open before Navratilova took the final two: Wimbledon and the U.S. Open.

"I think it's much more competition," Sanchez Vicario said. "I think it's better to see more players win than just one as it was in the past. I think it's better to see more players win than just one as it was in the past. It's changing. It's much more interesting now to watch women's tennis, and the future will get even better."

While Graf has stumbled in the Grand Slam tournaments since capturing the Australian in January, she has not fallen far.



Steffi Graf

"I don't think she's lost her confidence," Sanchez Vicario said of Graf, whom she beat in the championship match of the Canadian Open earlier this month. "She's only lost four matches this year. You still have to play your best to beat her."

"Right now there's a much better chance to beat her. The other players think there's a possibility to beat her, but she's not giving up. She's playing very well at the

moment."

The Canadian Open defeat was the first time Graf has suffered a hardcourt loss this year, dropping her record on the surface to 32-1. It also snapped a 48-match hardcourt winning streak for the German. Her last hardcourt loss came March 20, 1993, when Sanchez Vicario beat her in the Lipton final.

"I don't think she's struggling," Sanchez Vicario said. "Our head-to-head record is

23-7 for her."

"We know each other really well because we play so many finals against each other. But every match is different. I surprised her in Montreal because I went to the net a lot and won a lot of points. I just tried to be aggressive."

One semifinal could be an all-Spanish affair if the seedings hold for both Sanchez Vicario, who opens against Linda Ferrando, and Martinez, who will first face Veronica Martinek.

"It's great to see so many Spaniards doing so well," Sanchez Vicario said. "I'm happy when other Spaniards are doing well — not only in tennis but in all the sports."

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Al Ahli capture under-18 basketball championship

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Ahli Saturday secured their first basketball title of the season when they retained the under-18 trophy despite losing 60-56 to Al Jazireh who came in second.

It was Al Ahli's only defeat in the second round of the competition in which eight teams took part. In another match, Al Orthodoxy beat Al Abbasi 75-35 and settled for third place in the championship organized by the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF).

Al Jazireh players had a hard task against Al Ahli as they needed to win by 17 points to clinch the trophy. But their 4-point win was nevertheless important for the team's morale after surprisingly losing 56-54 to Al Orthodoxy last week in a repeated match.

Al Jazireh were leading Al Orthodoxy 49-42 when electricity went out at the sports palace Wednesday prompting JBF officials to repeat the match. Al

Jazireh had won their first round encounter 69-46.

Al Abbasi finished fourth after losing to Al Orthodoxy and the rest of their second round matches 71-63 (40-29) to Al Jazireh, 77-50 (42-26) to Al Ahli.

However Al Abbasi again proved that they are the newest face in top level competition. Though a second division club with modest capabilities, they have made it to the final rounds of most age-group competition they have registered to play.

Al Ahli, Al Orthodoxy and Al Jazireh however still dominate the game and are the top contenders for the season's basketball titles.

Al Jazireh have so far won the U-22 and U-14 titles. Meanwhile, Al Orthodoxy secured the U-16 competition and regained the women's trophy after titleholders Al Jazireh abruptly pulled out of the championship last month, citing technical irregularities and offhand approach

by the JBF.

In addition to the women's title last year, Al Jazireh also clinched the youth's under-14 and under-16 titles, while their men's team finished third in the first division, and second in the under-19 competition.

Al Orthodoxy, who dominated the Kingdom's basketball scene throughout the eighties are now aiming to strengthen their younger lineup of players after losing the first division championship to all-time rivals Al Ahli in 1990, 1992 and 1993.

Al Ahli's main concern at the moment seems to be holding on to their first division title. Their men's team recently returned from a tournament in Romania after scoring good results against top teams. However their younger age-group teams seem to be undergoing a transition period and even their women's team did not take part in the JBF's championship this year.

Makinen wins 1,000 Lakes Rally

JYVASKYLA, Finland (AP) — Tommi Makinen of Finland, driving a factory Ford Escort, won the 1,000 Lakes auto rally on his home turf Sunday, but second placed Didier Auriol of France bettered his chances for a first world title.

Makinen, 30, finished the three-day, 522-kilometre (324-mile) event in four hours, 33 minutes and 44 seconds, 22 seconds in front of Auriol and 1:04 ahead of third-place Subaru driver Carlos Sainz of Spain.

The 36-year-old Auriol, driving a Toyota, stretched his lead in the world championship standings from three to six points as he held off Sainz during Sunday's seven stages in the battle for second place.

Auriol also secured Toyota its second consecutive manufacturers' title.

Auriol will be the favourite for the next race in San Remo, Italy, Oct. 9-13, as he aims for the title after finishing in the top three each of the last four years. He placed second once and third twice for Lancia, and was third last year with Toyota. The rally season concludes with the British Race, Nov. 19-23.

Auriol tops the standings with 90 points. Sainz has 84 and defending champion Juha Kankkunen, of Finland 74.

Tommi Makinen, tutored by Kankkunen, became the first Finnish driver over since 1989, when Pentti Aikikala won the RAC. Stepping in for Italian Miki Biasion, Belgium-based Makinen emphasised the great promise he has shown in recent years.

Sainz, a two-time world champion, was in an attacking position against Auriol Sunday morning, but an accident landed him in a ditch and cost 13 seconds over the first two stages. Three stages later the Spaniard conceded he had no chance to overtake.

Home favourite Kankkunen effectively lost the rally during Friday's second stage in a somersault that damaged his factory Toyota.

Schumacher wins Belgian GP, strengthens hold on world title

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, Belgium (AP) — Michael Schumacher of Germany strengthened his hold on the world championship Sunday, winning the Belgian Grand Prix ahead of challenger Damon Hill.

It was his eighth victory in 11 races.

McLaren Peugeot driver Mika Hakkinen of Finland took third place, ahead of Schumacher's Benetton Ford teammate Jos Verstappen. Hill's Williams Renault teammate David Coulthard was fifth.

Schumacher, who took the lead on the first lap and only briefly gave it up for a pit stop, finished the 44-lap run on the 7.135 kilometre (4.433 mile) in one hour 28:33.508 minutes, averaging 208.705 kph.

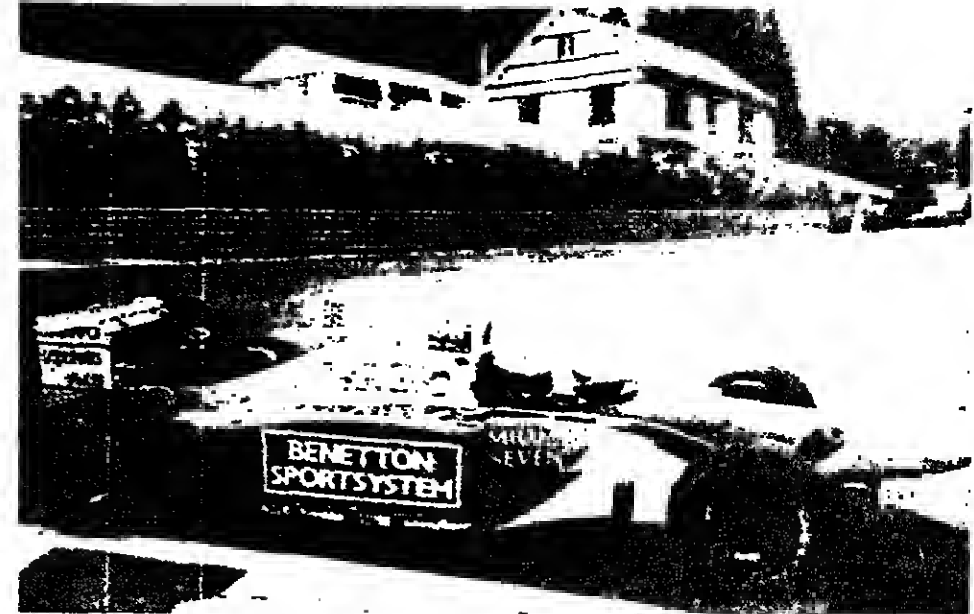
Schumacher now leads the world title standings with 86 points, a massive 35 points ahead of Hill with only five races to go. A win earns 10 points. Ferrari's Gerhard Berger is in third place with 27 points.

Hill won the Belgian Grand Prix last year, ahead of Schumacher.

Schumacher's win on Sunday could give him a virtual clinch of the world title, if two outstanding rulings go in his favour.

An appeal on a two-race suspension for disregarding a black flag at the British Grand Prix will be heard in Paris Tuesday. It could keep Schumacher out of the upcoming Italian and Portuguese Grand Prix races.

On top of that, his Benetton team could still be penalised for an alleged infraction



Michael Schumacher

in the refueling procedures at the German Grand Prix.

In contrast to Sunday's bright weather, the weekend qualifying sessions were marred by rain. Brazil's Rubens Barrichello stunned opposition with daredevil driving, going out on dry-weather tires on a damp track to gain his first pole in just 25 Grand Prixes.

But Barrichello held on to the lead for less than a lap and was quickly passed by Schumacher. The German didn't look back. He built up a 10-second lead over Hill in just three laps and steadily built up on it.

After the leading drivers came in for more fuel and new tires one-third through

the race, Coulthard was 15 seconds behind, with Hill a further four seconds back and struggling to keep pace.

Schumacher, cheered on by thousands of Germans from just across the border, kept piling the fastest lap times.

It seemed that all he had to do was put his car on cruise control for another easy win when he made an unexpected spin in the 18th lap. He came too high on the curb of a slow corner, spun 360 degrees, but immediately went on again, having lost only seven seconds of his 25-second lead.

He regained his composure quickly but Coulthard slowly crept up to briefly rob him of the lead in the 28th lap during

a pit stop. Coulthard went for new tires one lap later and found himself with only a 10-second gap with the final third of the race to go.

Coulthard gave up second place to Hill in the 38th lap and lost any chance of winning because of technical problems.

Schumacher controlled the race from there on to win his second Belgian Grand Prix here in three years.

His win on the fast Spa-Francorchamps circuit also demonstrated the dominance of the Benetton Ford car. Two weeks ago, it won on the slow, technical circuit in Budapest for the Hungarian Grand Prix.

Leblanc wins men's world road race title

AGRIGENTO, Sicily (AP) — Luc Leblanc of France threw his cap into the air and raised his arms Sunday, crossing the finish line by himself as he won the men's professional road race at the world cycling championships.

Leblanc broke away in the last kilometre as the road climbed up from the valley of

Greek Temples and reached the finish line nine seconds ahead of Italy's Claudio Chiappucci and countryman Richard Virenque after a gruelling 251.75 kilometres (156.5 miles) in torrid weather.

The 28-year-old from Limoges gave France its first men's road title since 1980

when Bernard Hinault won at St. Leger, completing 19 laps of the circuit in 6 hours, 33 minutes, 54 seconds at an average speed of 38.347 kph (23.8 mph).

Italy's Massimo Ghirotto, the last cyclist to surrender to Leblanc's decisive attack, finished fourth in the same time as Chiappucci and Virenque.

Russian Dmitry Konyshev was fifth, 15 seconds behind. Denmark's Rolf Sorensen edged defending champion Lance Armstrong of the United States for sixth place.

Leblanc, who turned professional in 1987, considering quitting two years ago because of his disappointing results. After his victory, he rushed to embrace his wife Maria.

"My wife kept me going. I thank her for helping me to overcome the problem," he said.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

New quake hits Mascara region

ALGIERS (AFP) — A powerful earthquake reaching 4.1 on the Richter scale hit Algeria's Mascara region Sunday causing some damage, the research centre for astrophysics and geophysics said here. The tremor which struck at around 7:30 a.m. (0650 GMT) came 10 days after a quake measuring 5.6 on the open-ended Richter scale devastated the region, claiming 171 lives. More than 10,000 people were left homeless and 289 were injured. A quake on the magnitude of four can cause moderate damage. The research centre said houses which had already been damaged in the Aug. 18 quake collapsed. "People were gripped by great panic," a radio report said earlier. The epicentre of the quake was in the Beni Chougrane mountains where the earlier quake was also located.

Foreign minister visits Pakistan, China

ALGERIA'S foreign minister was on his way to Pakistan and China for a diplomatic campaign to rally support for the U.N. trade sanctions. Adel Ibrahim, a spokesman for the Algerian embassy in Amman, said Ibrahim was on his way to Islamabad and Beijing to discuss the worsening economic situation in Algeria and the sanctions. He declined to say whether any progress in his mission, which was part of the Security Council's regular 60-day review of the sanctions, was scheduled for Sept. 18.

Candidates for W. Sahara for polls

RABAT (AP) — Members from the Organisation of African Unity and the Polisario front have arrived in Western Sahara for a long-delayed self-determination referendum. The OAU and Polisario delegations arrived in the desert on Saturday for the launch of the referendum. A spokesman told Reuters by telephone that the referendum was the last obstacle to be overcome. The Polisario (Morocco and Polisario) are now collaborating with the U.N. for the registration and the identification of persons eligible to vote, she said. The referendum is the last step in the former Spanish colony where Polisario guerrillas have fought a long-running war for self-determination.

Egypt police arrest insulin smuggler

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian airport police on Sunday arrested a Nigerian man who tried to smuggle out half-a-million insulin injections packed in 12 suitcases, airport sources said. Security officials said the haul, worth one million Egyptian pounds (US\$200,000), was the biggest attempt to smuggle insulin out of Egypt. The man, Emmanuel Adegboye, was arrested after he had bought the insulin from a Nigerian who said he planned to sell it in Nigeria. Most medicines can be bought in Egypt without a prescription. Many are subsidised by the government.

Finnish MP seeks release of hostages

HELSINKI (R) — A Finnish member of parliament has gone to Turkey hopeful about seeking freedom for two young Finns reported seized by Kurdish separatists three weeks ago, his family said on Sunday. Turkish officials say the two tourists, Marko Hietalahti and Tuomo Pollari, were kidnapped by forces of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) at a roadblock in a largely Kurdish region. The PKK is waging a guerrilla struggle against Turkish forces for an independent Kurdish state in the southeast. The deputy, Bjorne Kallio, a member of the small Finnish Christian League, left Finland on Saturday together with Petri Hietalahti, brother of one of the two missing tourists. Mr. Kallio's wife Agneta said he phoned home from the town of Diyarbakir, optimistic of winning their freedom. "If everything goes well, the boys will be released...he is hopeful," she said by telephone.

Kurds threaten to hit French interests

PARIS (R) — A Kurdish separatist group threatened on Saturday to hit French interests in the Middle East in retaliation against an alleged French police crackdown on its members. Kurdish militants have accused police this week of brutally breaking up a demonstration outside Paris' Pompidou culture centre and holding nearly 200 protesters for questioning. "Kurds who were protesting democratically against massacres in Kurdistan were shamefully attacked by French security forces," the Kurdistan National Liberation Front (ERNK) said in a statement faxed to Reuters. "By this action, France declares its hostility to the Kurdish people," it said. Paris police authorities have not provided details of the Kurdish demonstration.

Wounded tourists prepare to leave Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Two Spanish tourists wounded in a militant attack on a tour bus will leave Egypt on Sunday with their families, a spokesman said. Ignacia Sanchez de la Torre, 45, was shot in the chest and is recovering in a hospital. Her husband, who was hurt in the attack, was shot in the head and is recovering in a hospital. The couple was on a tour of Egypt. The attack occurred on Friday when militants ambushed a tour bus just outside Nag Hammadi, about 100 km south of Cairo.

Kidnapping ring

TEHRAN (AP) — Iranian authorities have smashed a kidnapping ring in the city of Isfahan, a newspaper reported Sunday. The ring, which was active in the city, had been kidnapping people for ransom. The police said they had arrested several members of the ring and recovered some of the ransom money. The ring was active in the city of Isfahan, which is a major industrial and cultural center in Iran. The police said they had arrested several members of the ring and recovered some of the ransom money. The ring was active in the city of Isfahan, which is a major industrial and cultural center in Iran.

Family denies death for 'Israeli agent'

BAALBEK (R) — The family of a Lebanese man suspected of aiding Israeli commandos kidnap Muslim militant leader Mustafa Al Dirani from his east Lebanon home last May called on Sunday for his public execution for treason. "After confessing to his crime and his treason... we're no longer the family of the man who sold himself, his family and homeland to the Jewish devil for a small price," the Dirani clan said in a statement in the eastern Lebanon town of Baalbek. "We demand all honourable people and strangers to shed his blood and the blood of anyone whom investigation shows to be involved in the kidnapping," added the statement. The statement was signed by an official of the Faithful Resistance group led by Dirani. Dirani and his followers formed the small group in 1988 after their dismissal from the Syrian-backed Amal movement. Like the bigger pro-Iranian Hezbollah, it is hating Israeli forces in South Lebanon. The statement, which did not name the suspected Israeli agent but said he was related to Dirani, added that the execution should take place at Dirani's house.

Egypt tightens security

Combined agency dispatches

EGYPT HAS tightened security at hotels and tourist sites after militants warned foreigners to stay away from a controversial U.N. population conference expected to draw up between 15,000 and 20,000 participants.

Egypt's main militant organisation, the Gemaa Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group), has added a violent twist to the Islamist campaign against the conference, saying foreigners who take part will be risking their lives.

U.N. officials in Cairo refused to comment on the warning. The International Conference on Population and Development, organised by the United Nations, opens in Cairo on Sept. 5.

Hoteliers said they had already stepped up security to cope with the influx of delegates but had increased their security staff after a militant attack on a tourist killed a Spanish boy and wounded three Spaniards in southern Egypt on Friday.

White-uniformed police were deployed on street corners outside five-star hotels and tourist sites, already packed by Arab and Western tourists who returned to Cairo in force after a five-month-old lull in militant violence.

More plainclothes security men were stationed in lobbies of hotels to watch out for any suspicious elements. Guards were undergoing thorough checks of bags and suitcases. The hoteliers said police units provided by the interior ministry were closely monitoring entrances and exits of hotels.

There is maximum readiness for any emergency. Anything that you could think of security wise is available — metal detectors, electronic doors and very up-to-date equipment for sniffing (explosives), Wagdi Al Qadi, security manager at the five-star Marriott Hotel, told Reuters.

Another hotel manager who refused to give his name said: "We have already taken strict security measures and extra staff."

Conservative Muslims have attacked the draft conference document, which takes a pragmatic approach towards issues such as abortion and extramarital and adolescent sex.

Some of the more extreme critics say the conference is a bid either to cut the population growth in Islamic states or to promote "immoral and corrupt" liberal views on sex and family.

In Castel Gandolfo, Italy, Pope John Paul said he feared the conference would promote sexual relationships devoid of ethics and family values.

"I fear a certain tendency of the conference's draft document to conceive sexuality in a manner that is too individualistic and does not give enough value to... marriage and the family," the pontiff said during his weekly angust message.

Speaking to pilgrims at the papal summer resort in the hills south of Rome, the 74-year-old Pope said the Cairo conference should promote responsible sexual relationships in marriage.

"It would be very grave if during the conference... instead of aiming toward promoting a culture of responsible procreation participants would be content to accept or even favour sexuality that is devoid of ethical reference points," he said.

The Pope has made the conference one of the toughest battles of his reign and wants it explicitly to exclude abortion as a means of population control and to defend traditional family values.

Iran said Sunday it would take part in the conference. Health Minister Alireza Marandi told the official Iranian news agency that Iran would participate to "be able to introduce its position on the conference's draft working document and make suggestions for correcting parts of the plan."

He said parts of the action plan on population control were "completely vague and contained double-meanings" and had to be rectified.

The authors of the document were "mainly Westerners and Western-educated people whose moral ideas differed" with those held in Islamic Iran, he said. See related story on page 2



GUARD OF HONOR: His Majesty King Hussein accompanied Turkish President Suleyman Demirel inspecting a guard of honor at the outset of a brief visit the Turkish leader paid to Jordan on Sunday (see page one) (photo by Yusef Al 'Alam)

Arafat seeks dialogue with Hamas

GAZA (Agencies) — Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said Sunday he was trying to open talks with the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, which opposes his peace deal with Israel.

Mr. Arafat, who has reined in security chiefs keen to crack down on militants, told Reuters he was orchestrating contacts "at different levels" to bring Hamas on board.

He was speaking at his Gaza seaside headquarters hours before two Israelis killed by Hamas on Friday were due to be buried.

The attack increases pressure on Mr. Arafat to prove to Israel he can deliver on security before Palestinian authority is extended from the self-rule areas of Gaza and Jericho to the rest of the West Bank.

To achieve this Mr. Arafat has shelved the military option in favour of the political. Looking tired during the early morning interview, Mr. Arafat sought to play down the Hamas attack which Israel's police chief called a test for future Israel-PLO security cooperation.

Mr. Arafat said he thought the two Israelis were stabbed to death in a dispute with their Palestinian labourers.

But Hamas, an implacable enemy of the Jewish state, called it a military operation to mark the six-month

anniversary of the massacre of more than 30 Palestinians by a Jewish settler in a Hebron mosque.

Israel said it expected the Palestinian authority to capture and turn over to the Jewish state the militants who stabbed two Israelis to death Friday.

"Our assumption is that they will go after them and they will hand them over to us," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's spokesman Oded Ben-Ami told Reuters.

Israel police on Sunday conducted wide searches inside Israel for Arab workers from the Gaza Strip and West Bank inside Israel without permits. Police told Reuters almost 200 Palestinians without permits had so far been rounded up.

Palestinian police chief Nassir Youssef said last week he could stop Hamas, attacks if he had a "political decision" from the PLO to do so. But Mr. Arafat senses that Hamas afraid of being left behind while he builds a Palestinian state, is ready to talk.

"The dialogue is still in the beginning," Mr. Arafat said shortly after dispatching an aide to a late-night meeting with Hamas officials.

"I have the right to open dialogue with the opposition," Mr. Arafat said, likening himself to Mr. Rabin who has sought to bring right-wing

and religious parties to his coalition. "So that they will accept the peace process. It's very important," Mr. Arafat said.

Asked if he had detected a change in Hamas, Mr. Arafat was very cautious. "Still we have to wait and see," he said.

An Islamic fundamentalist on Sunday joined a temporary town council in Jericho, the first time hardliners have participated in an institution under Palestinian self-rule.

But a local Muslim leader said the movement — had not changed its position and would not join any "political" institutions which consolidated self-rule.

"Taking part in the town council is a national duty fulfilling the public interest and we make a complete, clear distinction between the rejected institutions of self-rule and service institutions," said a statement issued in the name of the Islamic Movement in Jericho.

Islamist Samir Joha joined 11 other members of the new council, which will work to improve services in the Jericho self-rule area, home to about 20,000 people.

Similar negotiations to bring Hamas supporters onto town councils in Gaza City and Nablus failed, and the councils were formed without any participation from militants. Hamas is in a state of flux,

debating internally whether to form a political party and seek influence through the ballot like its counterpart in Jordan, the Muslim Brotherhood.

Hamas sources said the group, which flourished during the Palestinian uprising against Israel, was afraid of being marginalised.

The sources confirmed contacts with the PLO were under way and said Hamas would stand in an election for a Palestinian parliament.

"What is needed is a dialogue that will not fail so it has to be carefully prepared," Ismail Hanieh, a former Hamas deportee and lecturer at Gaza's Islamic University, told Reuters.

"We need positive signals from the (Palestinian) authority that it is interested in talks with all who want to be involved in building the state," he said.

"Hamas accepts running for legislative elections, assuming free elections will take place," he added. Mr. Arafat said election would be free and assured Palestinians they could apply to the authority to form political parties.

He blamed Israel for the delay in holding elections for a body to run self-rule which he wanted as soon as possible. Voting should have taken place last month but is now unlikely before the end of the year.

Tourabi: Sudan tried to oust Carlos

BONN (Agencies) — Sudanese Muslim leader Hassan Al Tourabi was quoted on Saturday as saying his country had tried to kick out "Carlos the Jackal" before handing the guerrilla over to France for trial.

The German news weekly Der Spiegel quoted Dr. Tourabi, thought to wield large influence over Sudan's military rulers, as saying Carlos had lived in Khartoum for about a year before police discovered his true identity.

"The first thing we did was demand that Carlos leave Sudan immediately because we want absolutely nothing to do with these kinds of dark figures and their backers," Dr. Tourabi said.

"After Carlos refused to leave Sudan... we had demanded that he go back where he had come from, we delivered him to France," he said in an interview in early issues of the magazine due to hit newsstands on Monday.

Carlos, linked to several bombing attacks in the 1970s and 1980s, was arrested in Sudan nearly two weeks ago and spirited to France where he is in a Paris jail awaiting trial.

Dr. Tourabi said Carlos had flown into the country on a forged passport together with a woman. He claimed to be a businessman, he added.

But he said Sudanese state security police had discovered Carlos' true identity without the help of Western agencies.

"This man's almost provocative lifestyle, all the money he spent, made us suspicious. None of the business activities took place that he had given as his reason for entering," he said.

"I don't understand all the excitement: a terrorist succeeded in fooling our police for a while with false papers. In the name of Allah, that must happen in Germany or elsewhere in Europe much more often than here."

Dr. Tourabi, a French-educated law professor who held key posts in past Sudanese governments since the 1970s, also denied news reports that Sudan had made a deal with France to trade Carlos for money or support.

He has no official capacity in Sudan's present government but he is known to have been behind the June 1989 coup which brought President Omar Hassan Al Bashir's military junta to power, ousting an elected government.

London's Sunday Times said Carlos came to police attention after a fight with the son of a Sudanese mistress.

In an interview the mistress, Zainab Al Mahdi, said her 25-year-old son "didn't like me seeing a foreign man" and started a scuffle inside her up-market jewellery shop in Khartoum with the man she knew as Abdullah.

A crowd gathered and police were called, the paper reports. When they arrested Carlos, they found that although he had a diplomatic passport he was not registered with the foreign ministry and reported him to the security services, who already had him under surveillance.

"It was entirely my son's fault," said Ms. Al Mahdi, a society woman in her late forties whose family is linked to the Sudanese opposition.

The paper said that after the arrest, Carlos was held for three days while agents searched his flat and established his real identity as the world's most-wanted man, even before the French tip-off that he was in Sudan.

But it says that Ghazi Saleh, political advisor to President Bashir, could not explain why it then took so long for Carlos to be handed over to the French, saying only that "we were unfamiliar with international law."

Ruling coalition wins Syrian polls

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria's ruling coalition, the National Progressive Front (NPF), won the latest legislative election comfortably as expected, according to official figures.

The seven-party coalition, headed by President Hafez Al Assad's Baath Arab Socialist Party, won 167 of the 250 seats in the People's Assembly, compared with 166 in the 1990 elections.

All the NPF candidates were elected, taking 66.8 per cent of the seats. Others who were successful included Basil Dahdoh, a member of the banned Syrian National Social Party, for the second time.

Independent candidates won 83 seats and women 24, compared with 21 in 1990. In Damascus, 10 seats were won by industrialists and rich traders.

But journalists, writers and actors who stood were snubbed, except for author Collette Khoury, grand-daughter of a former prime minister, who was re-elected.

The country's 100,000 strong Armenian population was given its own special representative for the first time, following the reservation of a vacant seat at Aleppo two years ago at the request of visiting Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian, a native of the city.

Almost 3.7 million people voted on Wednesday and Thursday, accounting for 61.17 per cent of the electorate compared to 49.63 per cent in 1990, Interior Minister Mohammad Harba said late Saturday.

The poll was conducted according to a first-past-the-post system, the winning candidates being those gaining the most votes on a list. It was the sixth legislative election to be held since Mr. Assad came to power in a coup in 1970.

Voters returned 92 members of the outgoing parliament, including Parliament Speaker Abdul Kader Qadour and Prime Minister Mahmoud Za'bi.

Analysts said the outcome indicated no major shift in policy. Candidates of the NPF won all five previous elections.

The results showed most independent candidates, including wealthy businessmen who spent vast amounts of money on their campaigns, won the seats they had sought.

Mr. Harba said the total number of eligible voters was 7.3 million but this included Syrians living abroad and members of police and armed forces.

The minister said that apart from polling violations in three centres, the process went smoothly and no violence was reported in any of the 8,531 polling centres in 15 districts in the country.

He said officials running three polling centres in the capital Damascus had allowed people below the age of 18 to vote and had let others vote without their own identification cards. He said they were detained and sent to court for trial.

The minister said the number of women in parliament increased to 24 from 21 in the previous assembly. "The elections were conducted in an atmosphere of order, freedom and honesty," Mr. Harba said.

The turnout reflected the people's belief in the large role that would be played by parliament as the highest legislative body in the country," he added.

The NPF groups Mr. Assad's Baath Party, the Communist Party (two branches), the Socialist Union, the Arab Socialist Party, the Unionist Socialist Party, and the Unionist Socialist Democratic Party.

COLUMN

Britain bored with coverage of royal family

LONDON (R) — Britons are bored with press coverage of the royal family's troubles and still solidly support the monarchy, an opinion poll showed Sunday. The poll in the Independent On Sunday newspaper said 80 per cent of the 1,100 adults questioned said they were fed up with reading about the royal trials and tribulations which regularly dominate the front pages of British papers. Sixty-six per cent of those questioned said the monarchy should continue indefinitely. But more than half of those aged under 35 questioned in the NOP poll said they had little or no respect for Queen Elizabeth and her family. Sixty-eight per cent of the sample said they think Prince Charles and Princess Diana should get a divorce.

New accuser fingers Diana over hoax calls

LONDON (AFP) — A former friend of the Princess of Wales was quoted as saying that he too had received hoax telephone calls which he believed could have been from her. The princess, estranged wife of the heir to the British throne, denied in a newspaper interview last week that she had made anonymous hoax calls to another acquaintance, art dealer Oliver Hoare, after the weekly News Of The World alleged that they had come from her private number. The latest edition of the mass-circulation Sunday tabloid quoted James Hewitt, a former riding instructor to the princess, as saying that a year ago, after he stopped seeing her, he received about 10 mysterious calls over three weeks. "The phone would ring. I'd pick it up and say 'hello, hello' but there was nothing at the other end," he said. "It would always be me who put the phone down. The other person wouldn't. I thought it was a crank at first," Mr. Hewitt, 35, whose relations with the princess were the subject of press controversy when he taught her to ride, said he thought she could have been responsible. "I think that's probably been done before," he said.

Ted Turner to undergo cancer operation

ATLANTA (R) — Television magnate Ted Turner was expected to undergo surgery for skin cancer Saturday, a Turner Broadcasting System Inc. spokeswoman said. Turner, 55, had a minor cancerous growth on his hip that would be removed in an Atlanta doctor's office. He was not expected to require hospitalisation after the procedure. "It was just described as minor to me. The prognosis is for a complete recovery," said Kistie Riggall, a spokeswoman for Mr. Turner's cable-television empire, which includes Cable News Network, TBS superstation and Turner Network Television. Mr. Riggall declined all other comment. Mr. Turner was the keynote speaker Saturday at a Georgia state university ceremony where, according to media reports, he told students and their families he was leaving for cancer surgery after speaking for less than five minutes. The media executive, who is married to actress Jane Fonda, advised his audience to wear hats and use sun screen. Aside from being founder and chairman of TBS, Mr. Turner also is the owner of the Atlanta Braves baseball team and the National Basketball Association's Atlanta Hawks. "I'm going straight from here to a skin cancer operation," Mr. Turner said. "The one piece of advice I can give you is put on sunscreen and wear a hat."

Pope ends holiday

AOSTE VALLEY, Italy (AFP) — Pope John Paul II ended his holiday in the Italian Alps Saturday, fully recovered from the leg injury he suffered in April, his spokesman said. Joaquin Navarro Valls said the pontiff had stopped physiotherapy sessions prescribed to help him recover from a fractured femur, suffered when he fell while climbing out of his bath.